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ON SATURDAY
No.26 April 17, 2010

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PROPERTY IN PRICE REVIVAL

Pre-credit crunch levels reported by agents predicting summer of sales despite election

EXCLUSIVE

By JON COATES

A BOOM in the property market in west Kent this year has seen house prices almost return to pre-credit crunch levels.

And some of the million-pound-plus homes in Tunbridge Wells, Sevenoaks and Tonbridge are even selling for more than they were three years ago.

The credit crunch of 2007 and the global recession which followed led to a slump in the property market, with banks unwilling to lend and home-owners reluctant to sell in such an uncertain climate.

But the first quarter of this year has brought a welcome revival for the industry.

Homes in the most sought-after parts of Tunbridge Wells and Sevenoaks are selling within weeks – if not days – of going on the market.

And estate agents across the region say the lull in the property market seen in previous General Election campaigns, when buyers and sellers have waited to see the outcome, has not happened this year.

Business has been booming and they expect the market to remain buoyant throughout the summer.

Steve Bovis, associate partner of Wood & Pilcher, based in Tunbridge Wells, said the demand for quality homes was far outstripping supply, which has seen prices rise this year.

He said: "We still have a shortage of available properties in the Tunbridge Wells area and a massive number of people coming in from London and further afield.

"Regardless of the General Election result, with these conditions we are going to have a fantastic year. We are lucky to have excellent schools, a nice mix of properties and so many good reasons for people to want to live here.

"Prices are holding and even rising, particularly with the top end properties. We are selling properties every day, particularly in the £650,000 to £1.2 million price range."

Mr Bovis added: "We had a great 2007, a difficult 2008, a better than expected 2009 and since coming out of the snow it has been an amazing start to 2010, much better than we anticipated. We are nearly back to 2007 prices and in some cases exceeding them.

"Everyone is undecided about how the election will turn out.

"It will be close, but I'm not sure people are taking much notice with regards to property moves, they are just deciding to go for it. The only

CONTINUED ON PAGE TWO

Height of fashion

NEW spring/summer collections are being showcased during live catwalk shows featuring Royal Victoria Place's top fashion, jewellery and accessories stores.
Fashionfest '10 started at the food court terrace outside Marks & Spencer at the Tunbridge Wells shopping centre on Friday and continues Saturday, with professional models, stage lighting, music, dance and special effects.

FULL STORY – SEE INSIDE

IN TOMORROW'S

The newspaper that's just "95" Tunbridge Wells
ON SUNDAY
TUNBRIDGE WELLS

NEWS

- Are you spending again? In a special report we take a look at how town centres are faring in 2010 and discover some encouraging signs.
- And why ex-BBC star Geoff Clark is in crunch talks this week to settle an unfair dismissal claim.

SPORT

- Robbie Joseph and Dewald Nel on their hopes of being fit enough to return for Kent's first home game of the season, against Yorkshire, next week.

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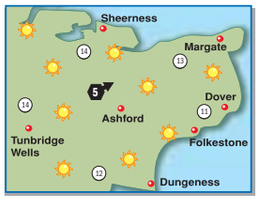

Today

It will be a dry and bright day with prolonged periods of sunshine and very little in the way of patchy cloud. Light south-westerly winds. Feeling pleasant for most with temperatures close to or slightly above the average, but perhaps turning chilly along the east coast. Max temp 11-14C (52-57F).

Sun & Moon

Sunrise	5.55am	Sunset	7.56pm	Lighting up times:
Moonrise	6.47am	Moonset	–	7.56pm to 5.53am

High Tides

	today				tomorrow			
	ht (m)		ht (m)		ht (m)		ht (m)	
Dover	01.03	6.5	13.25	6.4	01.37	6.5	14.02	6.3
Margate	02.17	4.7	14.29	4.5	02.53	4.6	15.05	4.4
St Mary's	07.06	5.5	19.22	5.5	07.42	5.3	20.00	5.3

Around Britain

		°C	°F			°C	°F			°C	°F
Aberdeen	cloudy	11	52	Edinburgh	fair	12	54	Newcastle	sun	15	59
Belfast	fair	13	55	Glasgow	cloudy	11	52	Norwich	sun	16	61
B'ham	sun	17	63	Isle of Man	sun	11	52	Oxford	sun	17	63
B'mouth	sun	14	57	Leeds	sun	14	57	Southsea	sun	14	57
Bristol	sun	11	52	London	sun	17	63	S'hampton	sun	14	57
Cardiff	sun	15	59	Liverpool	sun	14	57	Southport	sun	12	54
Cork	sun	13	55	Manchester	sun	15	59	Swansea	sun	13	55

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Property prices 'nearing pre-crunch levels'

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

interesting outcome could be if Home Improvement Packs (HIPs) are scrapped, which may prompt more people to speculatively put their homes on the market, but regardless of this people are still buying and selling."

Kim Stephenson, the agency manager for Bracketts in Tunbridge Wells, agreed: "We still have nowhere near enough stock, so everything that comes on the market is selling very quickly.

"There is an over-demand for the best roads, so we can scotch the national speculation that there will be an over-supply of properties after the election causing prices to slump.

"That is certainly not the case in the south of England. The reality is the market is extremely buoyant at the moment, even in the middle of a school holiday.

"While I'm hoping there will be a resolution to the General Election – we don't want a hung Parliament as it creates uncertainty – the market is very buoyant in the run up to the election, which is not normally expected.

"People have not been sitting back and waiting to see what is happening.

"Hopefully whatever party comes into power, this will give the economy a boost which will help the property market further.

"We expect the buoyant market to continue throughout the summer."

The residential department of leading estate agents Savills, which has offices in Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells, has carried out national research which found general elections traditionally temporarily reduce the turnover of properties as buyers and sellers await the outcome. The market normally returns to normal within weeks after the election, but it warned that due to nationwide transaction levels being at an all-time low, which has been keeping prices down, this election could cause a slump in the property market for longer than usual.

But Richard Smith, the head of residential at Savills Sevenoaks, stressed this was not the case in west Kent.

He said: "The date of the election has been thoroughly flagged in advance, so the market will not be surprised and the news does not appear to have triggered any big change in sentiment. We have a number of properties launching in the next month and I believe the best properties will still sell.

"There may be less competition between buyers and those who are waiting to gauge the market may look back in six months and regret a lost opportunity."

Diary entry foretold woman's gun death

A WOMAN gunned down by police in a town centre had written days earlier in her diary about dying in a shooting, ***writes Jon Coates***.

Ann Sanderson, 37, was killed by a single shot to the right side of her chest after brandishing a weapon at armed officers in Buckhurst Lane car park, Sevenoaks, in June, 2007.

The long-awaited inquest this week heard the last entry in a book titled 'My thoughts, my feelings, my fears' – which was found in Miss Sanderson's Bethel Road flat after her death – was about her being shot and killed.

In her opening statement to the inquiry in front of a jury in Gravesend on Monday, Catherine Milsom, counsel to the inquest, said: "The last entry was made in June, 2007. It said she had a story planned out that resulted in her being shot."

ANN SANDERSON: Shot and killed

Days later Miss Sanderson, a warehouse supervisor known as Tosh, was killed by a police marksman who feared she was about to open fire on officers, as she had previously threatened to do. An armed response unit had surrounded her in the car park behind M&CO clothing store, off Sevenoaks High Street, in the early hours of Monday, June 11.

When she refused to put down her black handgun and pointed it at police, 'Officer A' took the decision to fire a single round.

CCTV footage documenting the final hours of Miss Sanderson's life was shown to the inquest, which included her partner Tracy Sumner, on Monday afternoon.

The 110 minutes of footage, which included audio recordings of police radio and phone calls, ended with the 37-year-old being shot and slumping to the ground.

CCTV operator Patricia Parselle had seen Miss Sanderson wandering through the High Street at 1.20am holding what looked like a handgun and raised the alarm.

She observed Miss Sanderson, who was dressed all in black with the hood of her top pulled up over a baseball cap, drinking from a bottle of beer and taking tablets while pointing the weapon at CCTV cameras.

As the woman walked around the town centre bus station, she was seen taking a butterfly knife from her rear pocket before putting it away in the same place.

Miss Milsom said: "She was well known to the police and council workers as she had a habit of walking through the town late at night or in the early hours of the morning."

But on this occasion Ms Parselle was alarmed by her behaviour, telling Kent Police's control room in Maidstone: "I have watched her for years and I have never seen her like this. She has downed a lot of pills and she's definitely pointing what appears to be a handgun at the cameras."

Her lengthy criminal record included possessing and concealing bladed weapons, arson, criminal damage, and drugs supply and use. Further checks revealed that when Miss Sanderson had been arrested for arson four years earlier, a diary had been found in her home which contained an entry saying she wanted to kill a policeman.

After setting fire to rubbish in a wheelie bin in the car park, she slumped to the floor, propped against a wall, and called a friend on her mobile phone. She left a voicemail message saying she had started fires and had a gun, but this was not picked up until later.

Worried

Miss Sanderson then fell asleep for 44 minutes, but police did not approach as she still had the gun with her finger on the trigger and they were worried she was lying in wait for them to move forward.

When she finally woke up and started stumbling about three marked police cars surrounded her and ordered her to put down her weapon, stressing the dangerous situation she was in. But when she swore at the armed officers and pointed her gun at them, Officer A fired the single shot.

The officers tried to give her first aid and an ambulance attended, but she was declared dead at the scene at 3.10am. A post-mortem examination found alcohol and ibuprofen in her blood. The inquest continues and is expected to last up to three weeks.

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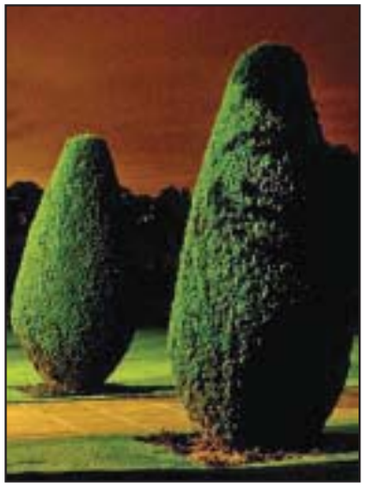

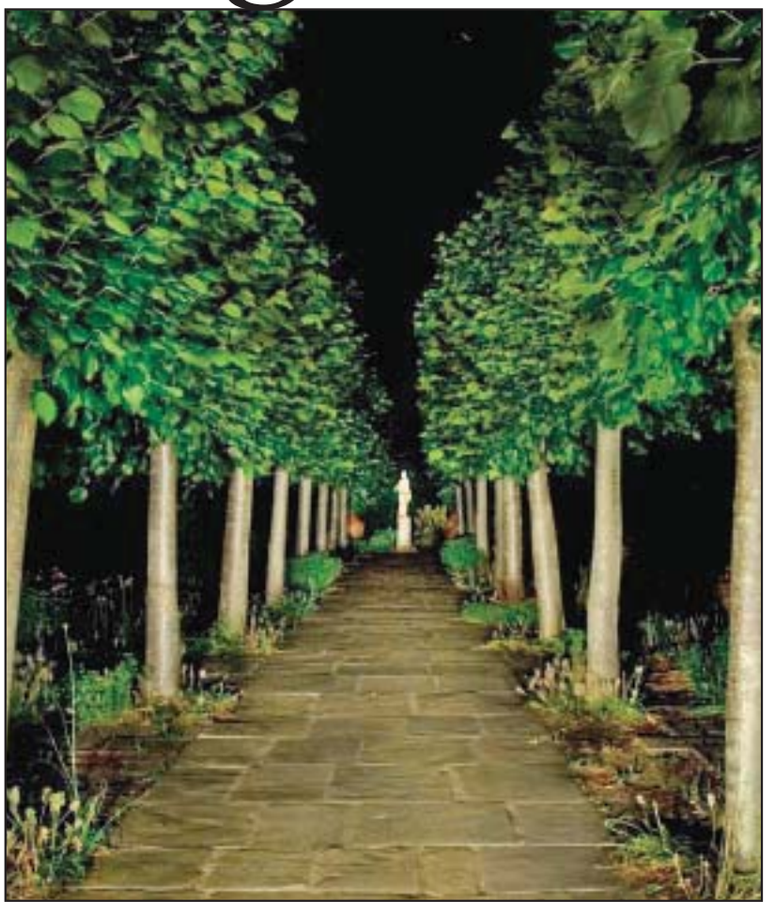

By **JENNA PUDELEK**
jenna.pudelek@kosmedia.co.uk

THESE fascinating images provide a rarely seen glimpse of the gardens at Sissinghurst Castle.

Because they feature in a new book of images of nocturnal botanical landscapes.

Canadian photographer Linda Rutenberg captured the astonishing and somewhat eerie world usually hidden from public view for her book The English Garden at Night.

Among the ten gardens included are the world famous Kew, Vita Sackville-West's Sissinghurst, The Lost Garden of Heligan and the Eden Project.

Vita Sackville-West, a poet and gardening writer, created Sissinghurst's gardens in the 1930s with her husband, author and diplomat Harold Nicolson, around the surviving parts of an Elizabethan mansion. The gardens were designed as a series of themed 'rooms'.

And it's been a popular tourist attraction ever since with the National Trust managing the estate.

Ms Rutenberg photographed 35 of the most beautiful and awe-inspiring gardens in the world for her series of books published as part of the project. The series also includes The Garden at Night – Private Views of Public Edens and After Midnight Through the Seasons at the Montreal Botanical Gardens.

The latest on English gardens includes passages by garden experts including Tim Smit, Adam Nicholson and Christina Harrison explaining the gardens and their history.

The English Garden at Night, published by Thames & Hudson, is priced £24.95. See www.thamesandhudson.com.

Fashionfest'10 dresses up

NEW spring/summer collections will be showcased with two days of live catwalk shows featuring Royal Victoria Place's top fashion, jewellery and accessories stores.

Concluding on Saturday, fashionfest'10 is on the food court terrace outside Marks & Spencer at the Tunbridge Wells shopping centre, and includes professional models, lighting, music, dance and special effects.

Each show has been specially choreographed to reflect the new season's trends, including feminine floral prints, hot tropical colours, candy fantasy and boudoir glamour.

The week-long event, which launched on Monday, is sponsored by this newspaper and SO Tunbridge Wells magazine

As well as daily catwalk shows from 11am, shoppers can enjoy a host of free events, including beauty style workshops with Clarins, Fashion Frenzy for children and the opportunity to win a £500 styling experience.

Senior marketing manager at RVP, Marc Burchett, said: "Fashionfest'10 is the perfect opportunity for shoppers to experience the latest trends and styles for the season ahead.

"The catwalk shows bring alive the diverse fashion available here and also showcases many new arrivals, including Topshop, Topman, Superdry and Pandora."

Find out more about the hottest new looks in a free copy of the spring/summer edition of Royal Victoria Place magazine from the concierge desk located on level two.

Discover Africa

THE Pantiles is to take on an African theme.

Saturday is African Safari Day at the historic parade with family events running from noon until 4pm.

Included will be a demonstration of African war drums, dancers and music and face painting for children. The event is in conjunction with Get Travelling.

The golden One

THE Brew House hotel has won an award for its One restaurant.

It picked up a gold award from online restaurant review and reservation site Toptable.com.

The gong was handed out after diners provided consistently high feedback for the quality of food and service at the venue.

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Trading blows over Pantiles

EXCLUSIVE

By JENNA PUDELEK
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A WAR of words has erupted between traders and the property tycoon landlord of the Pantiles amid uncertainty over the historic parade's future.

Last week the owner of the Pantiles, Norwich-based property management company Targetfollow, revealed it was seeking a joint venture partner to inject much-needed new funds into the Georgian parade.

Yet rumours the move is pre-empting a sale of the site refuse to die, despite Targetfollow flatly denying that is its intention.

But in an outspoken interview with this newspaper, the chairman and founder of Targetfollow, Ardeshir Naghshineh, has stoked further controversy by taking a swipe at tenants who rent commercial properties on the Pantiles.

Picture: CHRIS PARKER/TWBC

BATTLE: Targetfellow chairman Ardeshir Naghshineh says recession has hit Pantiles plans

Failure

And he blamed the recession – and the banks' failure to lend – for stalling his firm's plans at regenerating the tourist spot into a thriving commercial centre.

Wading into a long-standing row over rental prices, he admitted "we've had our ups and downs with tenants".

Asked if relations had improved, he said: "Some of the tenants are retirees, who don't open up their shops [until late]. They roll in at 10am or 11am. They're not doing enough sales."

And he points to incoming fashion firm Jack Wills as an example of a new tenant coming in and driving up footfall in the process.

"More footfall and more sales is good for us," he said. "And we always plough money back into improving the estate. We aren't going in like a bad landlord, we are adding value. The businesses should be doing better and we want to take some of that in rent."

But Janette Cowpland, chairman of the Association of Pantiles Traders, was angered by the remarks. "That's not true," she said. "I know for a fact traders open between 9am and 10am. It's just an excuse for ruthless behaviour.

"It may be that a lot of them are older, but they are diligent. I think the tenants would find it unjust and completely untrue."

Last week, Targetfollow confirmed international real estate adviser Savills had been called in to find a company, organisation or individual interested in a joint venture partnership in the town's most famous landmark.

The property group, which has a portfolio worth about £3 billion, bought the Pantiles along with Rusthall and Tunbridge Wells commons, including 250 acres of parkland with two cricket grounds, walkways, wood and two car parks, as well as the title Lord of the Manor of Rusthall, for £11 million in 2008.

Mr Naghshineh, who was ranked 167th in the 2009 Sunday Times Rich List with a personal fortune of £320m, did not rule out selling the estate and admitted development plans had been hit by the recession.

He said: "We are in business and will consider all proposals. It's not for sale though. We would not be in this position if the banks were still in business. If you go to the bank and say we need another £5m to turn the Corn Exchange into a cinema, turn the Auction House into houses, create a gallery, create a link to the town centre, all these things, they would usually be very helpful. But at the moment they are in retreat and recover mode."

The Iranian-born millionaire spoke about his company's desire to fulfil its improvements of the Pantiles and add value.

"That's what we do, refurbish and add value," he said. "It is not just about capital return. That is our business to make sure that it is more habitable and more useable to stakeholders and interested parties."

But he did not hold back on criticising tenants. He said: "Some are completely unreasonable. Some are 'Disgusted of Tunbridge Wells', saying we have not done this or that.

"We are improving thing socially. There are not as many drunks and people throwing bottles. We bought The Swan and now it's better and less rowdy. You couldn't go there at night, wandering round. On the back of Jack Wills there will be further footfall. We are in discussions with other stores. We have improved the facades; there are more flowers and an events programme. The tourist office wanted to go and we encouraged them to stay."

But traders' association chair Mrs Cowpland said tenants were worried about their leases running out because of the higher rent.

Squeezed

"They are being squeezed out because [Targetfollow] are only interested in high rental and bringing in big names," she said.

Mr Naghshineh, who had a 10 per cent stake in Woolworths and was, according to reports at the time, the biggest loser when the chain went bust, said the company's interests in the estate was worth around £25m.

Last week in this paper, leader of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Cllr Roy Bullock, ruled out the authority going into a joint venture with Targetfollow, but expressed interest in purchasing the commons part of the estate.

"We would not get in the way of the council owning things. The commons came as part of the estate to us and we have got to see commerciality of the transaction," Mr Naghshineh said. "If we see some improvements elsewhere then we could donate that to the council ... we will have meetings will the council and see what we can do."

Rose Trio concert

THREE sisters will be performing a range of music for wind ensembles including pieces by Mozart, Albinoni, Vaughan Williams and Gordon Jacob.

The Rose Trio, made up of the Thorn sisters, will perform in the King Charles the Martyr Church, Tunbridge Wells, on Saturday, April 24, from 7,30pm, in aid of the Tunbridge Wells Young Concert Artists Competition, which is in July.

Tickets are priced £10, concessions £8, £6 students. To book, call 01892 532654 or purchase on the door.

Currying favour

A POPULAR market will spice up its next event to raise funds for a welfare charity helping British soldiers.

Producers at West Malling farmers' market will be making and selling curry-related foods at the next meeting on Sunday, April 25.

A share of each sale will go to the Army Benevolent Fund, as part of its The Big Curry fundraiser.

For more information about The Big Curry, log on to www.bigcurry.org and www.soldierscharity.org.

Detectives in witness plea after alleyway rape ordeal

A MAN arrested on suspicion of raping a teenage girl in an alleyway near a railway station has been released on police bail.

The 29-year-old suspect had been held in custody and questioned by detectives about the sex attack in Hastings, East Sussex, in the early hours of Sunday.

The victim, an 18-year-old from Tunbridge Wells, was targeted near St Leonards Warrior Square station at about 4am.

She had been visiting friends in Hastings and was "extremely distressed" by the attack. Police said she was being comforted by her family at home in Tunbridge Wells this week.

British Transport Police said the man arrested has been released on bail until May 12, pending further investigations. Officers have renewed appeals for potential witnesses to come forward, particularly three men seen in the area at the time. The trio were seen getting into a taxi outside Ryan's supermarket, at the junction of Silchester Road and London Road, at about 4.15am.

After the rape a man was seen running along London Road into Silchester Road.

Det Chief Insp Simon Jones, the senior investigating officer, said: "We believe the three men might have crucial information and I urge them to contact us."

One of the men was wearing distinctive light-coloured three-quarter length trousers and flip-flops.

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THE INTERVIEW

BY JANE CONNOLLY

Go off-road to discover thrill of two wheels

GET on your bike and learn how to take it off-road with Bedgebury's first-ever cycling coach, Ollie Ireland.

Since December, Ireland has been showing groups of cyclists how to cope with the extensive trails at the Bedgebury National Pinetum and Forest at Goudhurst.

From youth and school groups to people with learning and physical difficulties, Ireland shows them how to make the most of this wonderful resource.

"Basically, there are two elements to my role," Ireland, 33, said. "One is to give them access to the forest. Some groups come from London and are made up of people who possibly hardly ever get to see green spaces. For them, it's liberating. The groups I taught today often cycle here so I'm showing them off-road skills, like how to turn on loose surfaces."

For two days a week, Ireland teaches in inner city London, but for the rest of the working week he escapes to the country. His activities include holiday off-road skills clubs for children, and he might look at running sessions for individuals next year.

His role is the result of a partnership between a number of organisations, including the Forestry Commission, Bedgebury Forest Cycle Club and Tunbridge Wells Learning Disability Partnership.

A qualified CTC off-road cycle coach, Ireland discovered a love of mountain biking after spending a few years skiing abroad. On his return to the UK he was looking for something to give him an equivalent adrenalin rush and he found it on two wheels.

He is keen to encourage others to give it a try, particularly people who might think the thrill of mountain biking is not for them.

"Sometimes people can be a bit timid, especially when they are just used to riding on flat surfaces. But once they find they can control the bike they can relax and enjoy it."

Ireland believes it is particularly important to get children involved in cycling for a number of reasons.

"There is an access problem, particularly in London," he said. "Speaking to young people I discover that they find small woods where they can build jumps and trails, but they generally get knocked down by councils.

"There's a real demand and cycling is an alternative to traditional sports like football. It possibly targets children who would not be playing the team games and it's a great way to keep healthy."

As well as getting novices into the sport and attracting people to Bedgebury, Ireland would like to discover new mountain biking stars and nurture the talent of local riders.

"I would like to encourage the skills of the gifted and talented riders and possibly get them into competitions," he said.

"Bedgebury has beautiful forest – you can ride for 10 minutes and be miles away and see no-one, which is quite unique. It is close enough to London to access, but just far enough away to feel like you're in the country."

Find out more about Ollie Ireland's coaching sessions and summer holiday clubs online at www.forestry.gov.uk/bedgebury or email oliver.ireland@forestry.gsi.gov.uk.

LEADING WAY: Qualified off-road cycle coach Ollie Ireland wants to encourage cyclists to discover the joys and health benefits of mountain-biking at Bedgebury Pinetum

Macmillan's marathon man

By **JENNA PUDELEK**
jenna.pudelek@kosmedia.co.uk

A LOCAL school teacher beat off competition from more than 2,500 runners in the most successful year yet of the Paddock Wood Half Marathon.

Staged last weekend, race chiefs are hoping to have raised over £8,000 for official charity partner Macmillan Cancer Support.

And that could fund more than eight weeks of care for one of the organisation's vital nurses.

But the biggest smiles were with the race winner.

Will Levett, pictured, a Mascalls School teacher and member of Tonbridge Athletic Club, won the race for the second year in a row with a time of one hour, nine minutes and 59 seconds.

Top woman was Tina Oldershaw of Paddock Wood AC with a time on one hour, 20 minutes and three seconds.

Race director James Ridger said it was the second time she has won the race and that she is one of the leading over-40 female runners in the country.

"It was a really good day," Mr Ridger said. "The weather was good and there was quite a breeze so it was not too hot for the runners. It was our most successful year yet with more than 2,500 entries."

The half marathon is now in its 21st year and is renowned for its flat and fast course over 13.1 miles through town and into surrounding countryside.

Macmillan said a team of supporters wearing giant foam hands and green wigs cheered on runners taking part in last Sunday's race.

Laura Kennedy, fundraising manager, said: "Our runners may have sore legs but their support will help many people living with cancer. Well done to you all.

"Macmillan is so proud of all the runners and supporters who made the event such a great experience.

"The Tenterden Rotary Club volunteered as Macmillan marshals for the race committee and did an amazing job. To reward them for 13 tough miles our runners picked up goodie bags courtesy of Warburtons, Tesco and Fitness First."

To support Macmillan in a less strenuous event, the charity is looking for walkers to sign up to the Penshurst Place trek through the 450-year-old estate in the Weald of Kent.

Walkers can choose from a family-friendly two-and-a-half miles or a longer eight miles for the event on May 16. For more information and to sign up visit Macmillan.org.uk/walking or phone 01622 600050.

Be wary of cold callers, say police

DETECTIVES have warned of the risks of allowing unexpected callers into your home after a television was stolen.

A resident in Fairseat Lane, Wrotham, was approached by a man at about 3.30pm on Friday, April 9, as he was returning home.

The man, described as white and in his 30s, claimed he was from the police and that there had just been a burglary at the property and two people had been arrested.

He talked his way into the house saying he needed to show the resident how the offenders had got inside. After he had gone, the resident noticed the TV had been stolen.

Anyone with information about this incident is asked to contact police on 01732 379217 (if possible quoting reference 5134) or Kent Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

■ A MOTORCYCLIST had his bike confiscated during a crackdown on speeding motorists by members of the Sevenoaks neighbourhood task team.

Officers said they were responding to concerns raised about speeding motorists by residents in Hextable and West Kingsdown.

Speed checks were carried out in the area earlier this month and several motorists were given advice by officers. The motorcyclist was also found to have no insurance or driving licence.

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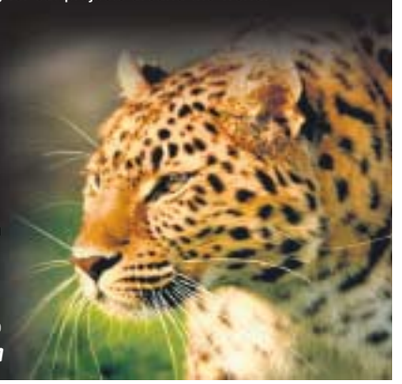
A guided tour of site to meet all the cats, including Lions, Tigers, Snow Leopards, Cheetahs & Amur Leopards, an opportunity to help us clean and tend the cats, assist with the cat feeding and to get some really good photos as mementos of the day.



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JULIE MADDOCKS

You'll get shirt shrift from me, gentlemen

IT HAS finally arrived: our long-awaited Great British summer.

Despite his fabulous reputation – and I hate to break it to him – but it doesn't even need Michael Fish to confirm the fact. You only have to step out of your front door to know it's true.

Officially, the first day of summer isn't actually until June 21, but it's almost as though the clocks going forward was the signal needed for our climate system to spring into action.

We have been chomping at the bit to get out there and enjoy the brighter weather. A little bit of sunshine and we all go mad.

Drivers have dropped the tops of their convertibles, lawnmowers have gone into overdrive and there's the definite smell of barbecued food wafting in the air.

But are we going to be left out in the cold again? I sincerely hope not.

The 2009 promise of a 'barbecue summer' raised our spirits, but left us disappointed. But in true British style we're off and running again, in the hope that this year will prove more successful – and April's temperatures do look hopeful. But why do we hold out such hope for good weather?

Could it be simply that we yearn for some good news? Last year it was certainly the case.

After the threatened flu pandemic, credit crunch and global recession, the promise of a good summer seemed comforting. For those who enjoy people-watching, the change in the weather can provide perfect material.

It's almost as if we don't actually know what to wear. We want to enjoy the sunshine, but most of us, sensibly, are wary of shedding our layers.

However, it seems there is one exception to the rule – the Kentish Man (and the Man of Kent). Can someone please tell me why there seems this compulsion for men in our county to whip off their shirts at the first sign of sun?

Shorts, T-shirts and even sandals – okay, not a problem – but hairy chests in the high street? Is there really any need?

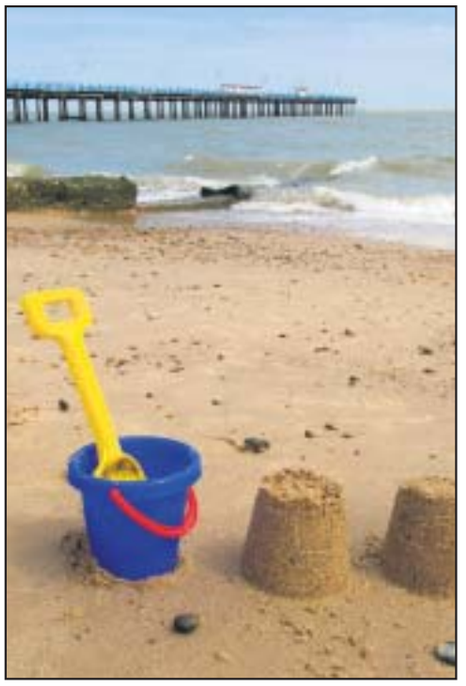
Apparently, yes, if last weekend was anything to go by. It's really not a good look for so many reasons.

Now don't get me wrong, I'm the first to appreciate the male physique, but I really don't believe it's appropriate to have a sweaty, red-faced man strutting his stuff as he nips out to get his morning paper.

I know I sound a prude, but I'm just not sure it's socially acceptable. Particularly so early in the season, when they haven't had a chance to tan, so we are faced with lily-white skin.

Personally, I think there's a time and place – back garden, park, the beach – but not the frozen food aisle of Asda. I nearly dropped my Arctic Roll as a half-dressed man pushed past me to reach for a Vienetta. Very off-putting.

I got in a right old tizz and ended up checking out with a trolley load of stuff when I'd only gone in for a pint of milk.



DIGGING IN: I can take the sun, sand and sea of summertime, just spare me sweaty topless males

Julie reports from around the county for KOS Media's broadband TV station www.yourkenttv.co.uk Contact her on julie.maddocks@kosmedia.co.uk

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GENERAL ELECTION 2010: As we continue the countdown until May 6 we look

'We've been preparing for

FACT FILE

Sevenoaks has been blue for decades, yet Mr Fallon has yet to serve it in power – despite having been in the Governments of Margaret Thatcher and John Major.

Originally winning his seat in 1983 in Darlington, he would go on to become Parliamentary Private Secretary to Cecil Parkinson, Secretary of State for Energy, from 1987 to 1988.

He then joined the government, first as a Government Whip and then promoted to Lord Commissioner of the Treasury. In 1990 he became Schools Minister, which he held until he lost his seat in 1992.

Five years later, as Labour swept to power, Mr Fallon secured Sevenoaks with a comfortable 10,461 majority and has been a safe bet ever since.

He is currently the senior Tory member of the Treasury Select Committee and chairs the Treasury sub-committee, that oversees HM Revenue and Customs.

JENNA PUDELEK meets a man who is used to serving within a Tory government – and desperate for the chance to do so again; Sevenoaks' Michael Fallon

IT'S a Monday morning, less than a week after Gordon Brown signalled the start of the General Election race.

And Michael Fallon is in campaigning mode. Sat in an office in an unremarkable industrial estate between Sevenoaks and Otford, the town's MP seems busy yet relaxed.

How much of that is early days of a well-funded campaign, and how much the comfort of a 12,970 majority is difficult to discern.

Barring an almost inconceivable swing to his opponents, Mr Fallon will be once again returned to Parliament.

Not that he's lost any of the hunger to serve, and this election is clearly filled, for him, with the promise of his party returning to power and injecting what he describes as some "energy and vigour' into Parliament.

"We will get the economy moving. At the moment we have a hung economy – we are half in and half out of recession," Mr Fallon said from within Beckett House, dressed in a smart suit and tie, greeting everyone, from campaigners to the postman, with the warmth only a politician on the electoral trail can.

"We need to get the economy moving by stopping the tax on jobs and backing small businesses. But we also need to sort out the public finances. The bad debt needs to be sorted this year – we cannot wait a year, which is Labour's plan."

Among the issues he is campaigning for locally, is reopening Sevenoaks Job Centre and getting a fairer government grant for Sevenoaks District Council.

Whether voters trust the Tories to handle the economy is one of the main fighting points of the election and many have questioned whether shadow chancellor George Osborne has enough experience.

Ready

Mr Fallon said: "He's been shadow chancellor for five years. That is a lot of time to prepare. I've worked closely with him and he is a lot smarter than I am. He has the experience to think long term. It's a question of whether you want Brown's experience – he has messed up so many times.

"We need some new energy, we've got a very tired government that's made too many mistakes and we need some energy and vigour."

The MP for Sevenoaks since 1997, his constituency is spread over 20 villages and the towns of Sevenoaks, Westerham and Swanley.

He was up in the latter last weekend talking to voters. The area is in the main affluent, with some of the highest house prices in the country. But it was in the St Mary's ward in Swanley that the BNP had a surprise win in a borough council by-election after preying on fears of rising unemployment.

Mr Fallon is set to find himself standing on the same stage in the early hours of May 7 as the BNP are to field a candidate against him.

Mr Fallon said: "There are serious social issues there and quite a bit of deprivation."

He said in three hours of leafleting in the town he did not meet any BNP supporters and just one for the UK Independence Party.

"This is about changing the government and the BNP or UKIP can't form the next government," he said. "It is a choice between the only two parties who can, but having said that I understand people's concerns, particularly about immigration, which we are going to cap each year to form an annual limit.

"Also there is remoteness – people feel the Government is very remote."

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Trio of offences

A MAN has been jailed for assaulting a police officer, possessing heroin and stealing electricity worth more than £1,400.

Anthony Bashford, 36, from West Malling, was sentenced at West Kent Magistrates in Sevenoaks after pleading guilty to all three offences.

He assaulted the constable in August last year in Maidstone and was sentenced to 120 days in prison and ordered to pay £150 in compensation. Between May 2008 and October 2009, he pleaded guilty, along with other offenders, to dishonestly diverting electricity worth £1,404.61. He was sentenced to 120 days in jail to run concurrently.

He was also sentenced to 60 days in prison to run concurrently for possessing 2.43 grams of heroin in August last year.

Craft weekend

AN array of traditional crafts, live music, and food and drink will be on offer at the Weald of Kent Craft Show next month.

Thousands are expected to flock to Penshurst Place, near Tonbridge, over the duration of the event on the bank holiday weekend, May 1-3, when over 250 craftspeople will be displaying their goods.

Tickets are £6 for adults, £5 for seniors, and children under 16 are free if accompanied. Discounts are available in advance, see www.ichf.co.uk, or call 01425 277988.

■ A NURSERY will be holding a fun day for children aged under seven and their families at a village hall and its playing fields.

Langton Green Village House Nursery will stage the event at Langton Green Village Hall on May 1, from 1.30pm to 4pm.

Attractions will include stalls selling jewellery, cakes and books, a bouncy castle, face painting and a tattoo parlour, an obstacle course, and a craft corner.

Entry is £1 per adult and all are welcome.

at the key candidates in west Kent

a long time'

Sevenoaks candidates

Michael Fallon (Conservative)
Gareth Siddorn (Labour)
Alan Bullion (Liberal Democrat)
Paul Golding (BNP)
Louise Uncles (English Democrat)

2005 Election results
Conservative: 22,437 (51.8 per cent)
Lib Dem: 9,467 (21.9 per cent)
Labour: 9,101 (21 per cent)
UKIP: 1,309 (3 per cent)
Other: 984
Majority: 12,970 (30 per cent)

A major issue for families is the oversubscription of grammar school places.

One of his key campaigning points, he explained current Tory thinking on the selective education debate.

"In places such as Kent and Buckinghamshire if you need new places David Cameron has agreed we can have them," he said. "But we can have no new grammar schools in counties that don't have them."

It is not news that there is a shortage of grammar school places in west Kent and Sevenoaks does not have a grammar school, which means children have to travel to Tonbridge or Tunbridge Wells.

"There are no grammar school places here and not enough for our children, who are constantly being allocated them in Folkestone, Sittingbourne and Ashford. The Government has forbidden us from adding more places. We are even forbidden transferring places from the east where they are undersubscribed to west Kent.

"In the short term we want to add more places into existing grammar schools in Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells. In the medium term we need to be building places in Sevenoaks."

He would also give priority to pupils from Kent who pass the Kent Test because at the moment growing numbers of children are coming from other counties to attend grammars in particular.

According to TheyWorkForYou.com, Mr Fallon has a traditional Tory voting record.

He voted moderately against the hunting ban, strongly against equal gay rights, very strongly for replacing Trident, very strongly for greater autonomy for schools and very strongly against removing hereditary peers from the House of Lords. He voted very strongly for laws to stop climate change and a mixture for and against a wholly elected House of Lords. He voted both for the Iraq war and for an inquiry into the war.

"We've got to change, we can change this and we can get the economy moving – we can strengthen society, we can change politics," he said. "It's a real choice and we can change things if you change the government.

"The one thing about David Cameron is it will not be more of the same."

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GENERAL ELECTION 2010: As we continue the countdown until May 6 we look

Your choice: Us or the Tories

JENNA PUDELEK meets David Hallas, the Liberal Democrat who is trying to break the Tory stranglehold on Tunbridge Wells

FOR Liberal Democrat candidate David Hallas the battle to be Tunbridge Wells' MP is – in his eyes at least – a two horse race between his party and the dominant Conservatives.

And he may have a point. The last election results saw Labour on 20.6 per cent of the vote, while the Lib Dems secured 26.1 per cent. However, with nearly one in two voters putting their cross next to the Conservatives, he faces a mighty mountain to climb to find himself catching a train to Westminster.

The 29-year-old, who works as a primary school teacher in Sevenoaks, describes himself as "an ordinary chap trying to stand up for ordinary people" saying he decided to stand because he was "fed up" with current politicians and their swindling second home allowances and expenses claims.

His mood is as bright as the Lib Dem-yellow tie he's wearing as he discusses the case of the disgraced former Conservative councillor Graham Rumsey, who was jailed for council tax evasion.

Mr Hallas said he thought the Tories had "bowed to Lib Dem pressure" after he sent an open letter to the town's current MP, Greg Clark, questioning why Mr Rumsey was allowed to continue to serve as a Conservative on Southborough Town Council.

On Monday, Mr Clark clarified Mr Rumsey was no longer a Conservative councillor or a member of the Conservative Party.

"It's been going on over a year," Mr Hallas said. "The main thing is that he [Mr Rumsey] did not turn up to court three times. Why did they not kick him out then? That's my next question for Greg Clark.

"The Tories have got such a cartel here that they think they can treat the electorate with disdain and disrespect. When one party seems to run the show they forget about who they are supposed to be representing."

But he has a fight on his hands if he is to topple the town's popular MP, Mr Clark, who has a 9,988 majority.

Yet Mr Hallas is upbeat about his prospects and saw a vote for him as the only option for people not wanting to go Tory.

"If you vote Green or Labour, you get Tory – the only way is to vote for me," he says "A vote for the Green Party in Tunbridge Wells is a vote for almost the opposite view from the Greens because always the Tories win."

He attacked the Conservatives on green issues, he said: "In the Conservative Party a third of MPs doubt the existence and the validity of the science behind climate change.

"The Lib Dems are the only party that supports a carbon neutral economy by 2050. If you are green you have to vote for me."

He said the Mr Rumsey case showed "the sleaze of the Tory Party".

Mr Hallas said he gave up his car years ago and chooses to live near to where he works so he can walk there.

Asked whether living in Sevenoaks means he cannot understand the concerns of people in Tunbridge Wells, he said: "Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells are all connected by the same train line, the same schools and hospitals so I consider myself a local person."

Lib Dem plans if they win power include a near £3 billion rail expansion fund, which would be paid for by cutting part of the major roads budget.

However, Mr Hallas said he was in favour of improvement works to the A21. He said: "The A21 needs to be expanded because of safety issues and it is near Pembury Hospital."

He spoke about the plan for a 'pupil premium' that would reduce class sizes to 15 and provide money for schools to support children from financially disadvantaged backgrounds.

"The biggest barrier to a child achieving its full potential is its financial background," he said. "Schools in disadvantaged areas lack resources to target their needs."

On the issue of selective education, he said: "The decision whether to keep grammar schools should be made by the local council. There are enough places for all the kids that pass their 11-plus, the problem is that more are recruiting children from outside the educational region. Local kids should get their first choice before a kid in East Sussex."

He added: "A lot of people like the idea of a hung parliament, which work very well on the Continent," he said. "We could have Vince Cable instead of George Osborne as chancellor."

TW candidates

Greg Clark (Conservative)
Gary Heather (Labour)
David Hallas (Liberal Democrat)
Hazel Dawe (Green)
Victor Webb (UKIP)
Marcus Thiele (Popular Alliance)

2005 Election results
Conservatives: 21,083 (49.6 per cent)
Lib Dem: 11,095 (49.6 per cent)
Labour: 8,736 (20.6 per cent)
UKIP: 1,568 (3.7 per cent)
Majority: 9,988 (23.5 per cent)

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at the key candidates in west Kent across the main parties seeking your vote

Labour's Sevenoaks candidate has a mountain to climb but says he has a vital role to play. JON COATES reports

NEW faces and ideas are needed to restore the public's faith in Britain's political system after the MPs' expenses scandal.

That is the message of Gareth Siddorn, who is standing for Labour in Sevenoaks at the General Election – and also part of the reason he will contest the seat.

He said: "There's a need for people to come forward and stand up for politics as an active public service. The reputation of politics has hit an all-time low, so it's important for new faces to throw themselves into the debate."

Mr Siddorn, 27, also argues that strong opposition to incumbent Tory MP Michael Fallon, who is standing for re-election, is needed to "keep him on his toes".

Mr Fallon was elected with a 13,000 majority after taking a 51.8 per cent share of the vote in 2005. While accepting he faces an uphill struggle, the Labour man said: "As far as Michael Fallon is concerned, this is a job for life and when that is the case it becomes very cosy and stops creative thinking. We serve an important role in keeping the Tories in Kent on their toes."

GARETH SIDDORN: Labour candidate

Mr Siddorn grew up in Merseyside and went to school in the Wirral, before taking a history degree at Warwick University and an MA in international relations at Cambridge. After six months of voluntary work in India, he worked for Unicef on climate change policy and he is working on the environmental campaign of Labour's National Executive.

He said: "This is massively important in terms of saving our environment but also fits in with Labour's values in pursuing an international approach. The Tory approach of isolating us in Europe will not help. It's also an issue of social justice, as climate change affects poor countries first."

Mr Siddorn is working for the Charities Aid Foundation based at Kings Hill, West Malling, and lives in Plumstead, south-east London, but spends a lot of time at his girlfriend's home in Otford and has done for the last eight years.

He says the most important local issues are affordable housing and sustainable public transport. He said: "Sevenoaks is one of the hardest places in the country both to buy and rent. I don't think this has been given enough importance by the MP and local council. There are concerns for Fort Halstead and also for the development of the cold stores in Dunton Green, where 500 units are planned. We do need new homes, and particularly affordable homes, but we need small and medium-sized developments which meet local needs and much of this can be done on brownfield sites.

"Public transport is also a big issue. Forty per cent of Sevenoaks residents commute every day, which is an amazing figure, but the need for people to get from village to village is also important.

"We've been campaigning in South Darenth for more buses. It's also important that Labour acts as a local champion to hold Southeastern trains and the Conservatives to account."

Mr Siddorn is also keen to protect Sure Start centres, saying the Tories have only stated it is not their intention to close them, but he wants to go further and make them accessible to everyone.

Asked about the debate on opening a grammar school in Sevenoaks, he said he would rather have a comprehensive system that met the needs of all children.

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Why Witness is an arresting production

REVIEW

By CLARE GRANT

A NAÏVE young man stands in the dock. He is accused of the murder of a rich older lady he has befriended. To make matters worse, the wife he adores gives evidence against him.

But just what is the truth? Witness For the Prosecution shines in the expert hands of The Agatha Christie Theatre Company.

Much more than a simple courtroom drama, it twists and turns like a bag of snakes, and gasps were heard in the audience as the final pieces of the mystery fell into place.

The all-star cast includes Ben Nealon from Soldier Soldier, who made an excellent job of the bewildered, likeable Leonard Vole.

Denis Lill filled the stage as the cut-throat QC Sir Wilfred Robarts and Peter Byrne's out-of-touch judge drew scattered, tension relieving laughs from the audience.

The only criticism would be of Jennifer Wilson's housekeeper Janet MacKenzie – the character and her dialogue are so intrinsically funny that she doesn't need a comedy Scottish brogue larded on top. However, it cannot be denied that her triumph under cross examination raised a lot of laughs.

But Honeysuckle Weeks' extraordinary performance is worth the ticket price alone. Playing the German-born wife, she stood as witness, neat as a pin in her 1950s tailoring and pill box hat, and mystified, beguiled and appalled the audience by turns. Her accent was exemplary and her acting utterly convincing. Miss Weeks is best known for her part in another period mystery, the Bafta winning Foyle's War, so she has plenty of experience.

The clever set transformed itself from Sir Wilfred's chambers to the courtroom and the changeover had the feeling of a trial waiting to begin, with books being passed around and greetings exchanged.

Witness For the Prosecution was written in 1953 and consolidated Agatha Christie's reputation as a playwright as well as a novelist. It is easy to see why – not a word is wasted, and the witness' accounts echo each other in subtle and strange ways. The play is organised so that the audience is asked to act as jury.

Like most of Agatha Christie's works, the clues are there, but there is no logical Poirot or wise Miss Marple to hold your hand. As with a real court case, it's all about asking yourself what the evidence is all about, and who you trust in your heart of hearts.

• ***Witness for the Prosecution concludes its run at the Assembly Hall Theatre in Tunbridge Wells on Saturday, April 17. Shows are at 2.30pm and 7.30pm. Tickets start at £19.50.***

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Borough braced for local elections

By JENNA PUDELEK

jenna.pudelek@kosmedia.co.uk

VOTERS in Tunbridge Wells will be heading to the polls in a few weeks to not only choose their MP, but also their borough councillor.

The Liberal Democrats are keen to dent the massive Tory majority at Town Hall – the blues hold 44 of the 48 seats – and have put candidates up for election in all but one of the wards up for re-election.

Nominations for borough councillors closed last Thursday afternoon and local candidates will be joining their national counterparts on the campaign trail.

Only Capel, Goudhurst & Lamberhurst, Rusthall and Frittenden & Sissinghurst wards do not have borough elections on May 6 this year.

UP FOR RE-ELECTION: Councillors David Neve, Mike Rusbridge and Catherine Mayhew are amongst the candidates asking for your local vote

Who's up and where

In Benenden and Cranbrook current Conservative member Peter Davies, who won 1,183 votes when he was re-elected in 2006, will be up against Lib Dem John Rook.

New candidates John Billingham (Lib Dem) and Alan McDermott (Tory) will be battling for Brenchley & Horsmonden.

In Broadwater, incumbent Lib Dem councillor Peter Crawford, who won 503 votes in 2006, will be challenged by Conservative William Rutherford.

Culverden ward residents will choose between Ahsan Ahmad (Independent), Richard Leslie (Green), Patricia Theophanides (UK Independence Party), Ian Williams (Lib Dem) and the current Conservative councillor Leonard Price, who won in 2006 with 981 votes.

John Cunningham, the current Conservative member, who won 1,064 votes in 2006, will be up against Lib Dem Keith Brown and David Burgess, Labour, in Hawkhurst & Sandhurst.

In Paddock Wood East voters will choose between four all-new candidates Ron Goodman (Independent), Bill Hills (Tory), Raymond Moon (Labour) and Hugh Patterson (Lib Dem).

Paddock Wood West's current Tory councillor Elizabeth Thomas, who won 525 votes back in 2006, will be up against Damian Coleman, Lib Dem, and Labour's Terry White.

James Scholes, the current Conservative councillor for The Pantiles and St Mark's, who won with 1,156 votes in 2006, will be challenged by Peter Mills, Labour and the Lib Dem's Christo Skelton.

Park Ward residents will be choosing between Eileen Gayler (UKIP), Catherine Mayhew (the current Conservative member who won 1,250 votes in 2006) and Matthew Nash (Lib Dem).

Pembury's current councillor Michael Tompsett, a Conservative who won 1,124 votes in 2006, will be challenged by Lib Dem Lorraine Braam.

Ted Jolley the Conservative member for Sherwood, who won 754 votes in 2006, will be up againt Timothy Rich (Labour), Timothy Woodman (Lib Dem) and Christopher Hoare (UKIP).

Southborough & High Brooms residents will choose between current Tory Colin Bothwell, who won 849 votes last time, Dianne Hill (Labour) and Beverley Bradshaw (UKIP).

Southborough North will see Lib Dem candidate Jacqueline Prance challenge Tory Mike Rusbridge, who was voted in with 797 in 2006.

Residents in Speldhurst & Bidborough will choose between new candidates John Baldock (Lib Dem), Peter Fasey (UKIP) and Julia Soyke (Tory).

David Neve the current Lib Dem councillor in St James' ward, who won 776 votes in 2006, will be challenged by the Conservative Simon Bannister.

Phyllis Leslie (Green), Trevor Poile (Lib Dem) and Chris Woodward (current Tory councillor who won 760 votes in 2006) will be battling it out for St John's ward.

• ***Time is runing out – in order to have your say you must register to vote by Tuesday, April 20. Visit the Electoral Commission's website www.aboutmyvote.co.uk for full information.***

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Wild garlic is everywhere at the moment and is definitely worth trying.

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The Kentish tomato season has also started and we have a variety of these available at foodforkent.co.uk, including the delicious plum and cherry.

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TASTY: Wild garlic, above and left, and tomatoes are among the delicious treats at FoodForKent.co.uk

Bringing old and young together

By **MARIJKE COX**
marijke.cox@kosmedia.co.uk

A CIVIC service celebrating the achievements of past and present generations is being held by the Lord-Lieutenant of Kent.

The annual spring ceremony will take place at All Saints Church in Maidstone on Thursday, April 22, with representatives from the public services, civic dignitaries and national charities attending.

Lord-Lieutenant Allan Willet said the event will be a celebration of the youth of Kent – past, present and future – with particular reference to the 70th anniversaries of Dunkirk and the Battle of Britain, the 150th anniversary of the Cadet movement and the centenary of Guiding.

He said: "It is of great importance that the young people of today understand and appreciate the sacrifices of earlier generations, and that the older generations do not write off today's young people.

"So at the Civic Service, and at our main event at the County Showground in Detling, on May 15, it is right that we mix the generations and highlight the inspirational activity which is today flourishing among the youth of our great county."

Several events will be held throughout the year, based on the theme of young people and their achievements.

The Lord-Lieutenant of Kent was originally responsible for the military in times of emergency in the region. This responsibility was lost in the 19th century, but the holder of the ancient title continues to represent the crown in a ceremonial role.

Lord-Lieutenant Willett said the position aims to provide a focus for pride and achievement in Kent as well as a focus for stability.

EVENT: Lord-Lieutenant Allan Willet wants the generations to understand each other

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CHRIS BRITCHER

Racing towards disappointment

WATCHING the Grand National when your own hard-earned cash is riding on it provides ten minutes of exactly why gambling is not a habit my blood pressure could allow me to pursue as a hobby.

Because the exhilaration I feel when I think the £20 note I have thrust upon the back of a horse I know nothing about, in a sport I show an interest in once a year, may well return to me having multiplied in number, is so intense I can understand how people get hopelessly hooked.

I watch the creature take its place on the starting line. I memorise the colours. And I immediately see nothing other than a £20 note legging its way over the grass, the Queen's face leaping high above fences.

My heartbeat pauses as I await the commentator merely mentioning his name. As the hurdles come and go I pray not to see my little £20 note collapse in an undignified heap before striding off in the direction of William Hill's bulging back pocket. The delight as I realise he's still in the mix, still in with a shout of having some £20 note babies leaves me on the edge of my seat. The family told to be silent as they watch their father in a rare moment of gambling madness.

And so it was last weekend. As the final fences arrived my horse/£20 was still there. Right on the shoulder of the leader. My God it looked like it was going to win.

I did the sums in my head. A victory would net me hundreds. Hundreds of pounds I had done nothing to earn. Oh how gambling is so wonderful, my warped brain yelled. After this success we must invest the winnings, the little irrational voice in my head bellowed persuasively... in more horses! Perhaps I could make a living out of this. Let's try online poker. Let's try bingo. Let's just gamble, gamble, gamble.

But you can see where this pitiful little story is going. How this delight, how this advertisement for gambling, was about to shatter, taking my mood and self-esteem with it. Not to mention a bit of respect in the eyes of my children.

Because my horse went from looking a winner to fading like a cheap paperback left out in the midday sun. Away pulled the other horses. They practically turned around and raised a collective middle finger at me and my £20. Within the blinking of an eye the race was at an end.

My hopes of soon buying an island after a dramatic and profitable gambling career dashed as quickly as they had muscled their way into my easily-influenced little mind.

And the sense of loss. The sense of actual physical pain reminded me why gambling is simply not something I can ever pursue for fear of actually keeling over and dying through the sheer thrill and despair of it.

The only other time I've occasionally gambled has been on football matches. But it absolutely ruins my enjoyment of a game. I've cursed my own team scoring on occasion as it means the scoreline I confidently predicted and had money riding on was scuppered. And that shouldn't happen.

What's more, the one time the impossible actually happened, when I fluked the correct score and first goalscorer and saw £1 morph into £200, I must have reinvested the vast majority of that cash back into other games. None of which delivered any returns.

And so the joy and delight at my one win eventually became diluted until I returned once more to not caring for gambling.

Which is where I remain today.

Gambling is a mug's game. And although I will be the first to admit I'm a mug in most things, I'm not going to forget the pain of last Saturday's agonising farewell to my cash.

Chris Britcher is editor of this newspaper. Contact him with your news and views by emailing him direct: chris.britcher@kosmedia.co.uk

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Recession not hitting parties' funds as campaigning goes into full swing

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Please include your name and address, although these will be withheld in exceptional circumstances.

Please also include a daytime telephone number for verification (this will not be published). We reserve the right to edit letters.

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You can access all KOS Media's other titles this way too.

We're pure blue bloods

Re your story about the full coffers of candidates across west Kent last week.

Surely the Lib Dems and Labour could throw millions at their efforts and they still would not come close to toppling the Tory stranglehold at the polls?

This part of Kent is so blue you could decorate the Tardis with it.

J Harrow,
Tonbridge

There's no contest here

Gary Walker in your letters page last week suggested MPs in west Kent should never take their seat for granted.

Well, I'd agree if they were Labour or Lib Dem, but, let's not kid ourselves here, the three of them could sit at home with their feet up until May 6 and still be swept back to Westminster with sizeable majorities.

Mr V Hoggard,
Sevenoaks

A good influence

I thought your letter writer last week was rather cruel by criticising Golly Gosh's recent efforts to encourage youngsters to vote.

Surely anything which gets even one person to register makes it a success? I think Golly Gosh bring a lot of good publicity to the town and youngsters look up to them.

We should encourage rather than mock

L White,
Southborough

Local issues matter

Surely someone could have campaigned on some local issues as an independent?

A vow to sort out the cinema site and breathe new life into the Pantiles would certainly win lots of votes and provide an interesting alternative to Greg Clark and all the other candidates.

George Smith,
Tunbridge Wells

A deer price for speed

Your story last week about the number of deer deaths around Ashdown Forest seemed to leave the blame on the doorsteps of the landowners.

Yet surely it is the motorist who must take the safest step – and that is to simply slow down when on the roads winding their way through the forest.

Forest is worst in UK for deaths to deer

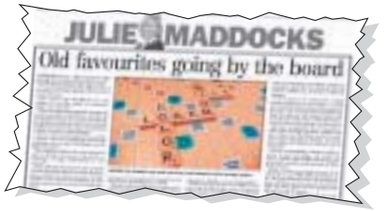
It's simply ridiculous we seem to look at all the options other than the ones most obvious – that we, as human beings, may need to change our behaviour.

Katy Townsend,
Crowborough

Change isn't proper

As a keen Scrabble player, I must admit to being rather disappointed at the latest rule changes.

After all, surely the beauty and the skill lies in the fact the letters are all judged on their use in the English language – excluding pronouns?


JULIE MADDOCKS

Old favourites going by the board

If you can now roll out Jay Z on a triple letter square or N Dubz it completely changes the way the game is played and how you deploy some of those big-scoring but oh-so-difficult to place, tiles.

Scrabble is popular courtesy of its simple game play and simple rules. Why does everyone always feel the need to change things in a bid to capture this mythical 'youth' audience?

Mrs Harris,
Tunbridge Wells

VOTE NOW...

Each week we'll be giving you the chance to make your voice heard online on a major issue.

This week we continue to ask your views ahead of the impending General Election.

And with campaigning under way, we ask if you have had someone on your doorstep yet trying to secure your vote. The question is: Has a political party called at your home since the election was called?

Answer yes or no by voting on the home page of www.yourtunbridgewells.co.uk, www.yourtonbridge.co.uk or www.yoursevenoaks.co.uk.

LAST WEEK'S POLL

Will you be casting a vote on May 6?

- **Yes** – 95 per cent
- **No** – 5 per cent

Letters continue on page 20

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS

Including family announcements in partnership with the Kent registration service

To register Births, Marriages and Deaths contact the Kent registration service on 0845 824 7400
For advertising announcement enquiries telephone Kent on Sunday on 01303 817150

BIRTHS

CLIFFORD
Welcome to the world Heidi Lowry Clifford! A beautiful daughter for David and Samantha and sister to Xavier, born on 25th March 2010.

DHADWAR
Jagdeep and Kuldeep are proud to announce the birth of their son Danjit Dhadwar. A baby brother for Avjit and a new grandson for Harminder and Balbir Sandhu. Baby born on 12th March 2010 at Darent Valley Hospital weighing 7lb 9oz.

GILHAM
Lucas George born on 6th April 2010 weighing 9lb ½oz. Son to Tara and Clive, brother for Levi, Micki-Ann, Mia, Tyler-Jay and Jessie.

HADLEY
Leanne and John welcomed baby John-Henry Hadley on the 26th March 2010 weighing 7lb 4oz. You are the miracle who we will love and treasure forever.

HUSEYIN
Aidan born on the 28th March 2010 at Darent Valley Hospital, weighing 6lb 11oz. Son to Adam and Michelle in Dartford.

KOVARIKOVA
Martin and Jana of Ramsgate celebrate the birth of their daughter, Aneta Kovarikova, on 20th March 2010.

MORGAN
Billy Geoff Morgan, born 18th March, weighing 8lbs 10ozs. A little brother for Alfie and another beautiful son for Gareth and Emma.

OLIVER
Martin and Judith Oliver would like to announce the birth of their son Ayrton on the 29th March 2010, weighing 7lb 7oz. A welcomed new edition to our lives.

OSBORNE
Evelyn Anne, born on 20 March 2010, weighing 8lb 7oz. Daughter to Tom and Karen Osborne in Maidstone.

PIKE
Thomas Alan, born on 25th February 2010, weighing 8lb 9oz. Son to Tony and Sian and brother to Megan and Aaron of Hunton, Maidstone.

TRIFILETTI
Roberto and Sarah of Sevenoaks are delighted to announce the birth of their daughter, Sofia Ellen Trifiletti, born at 9.24pm on 9th February 2010, weighing 7lb 7oz.

DEATHS

BREWER
David John Brewer of Ramsgate died peacefully on 30th March 2010. Funeral Service at Thanet Crematorium at 2 pm on Friday 23rd April. Enquiries to H R Palmer 01843 592720.

McLACHLAN Nee LANCEFIELD
Blanche, passed away at her home in Hythe on 10th April 2010. Funeral to be arranged with Earl and Co, telephone 01233 620522. Will be sadly missed by her family and friends.

MORGAN
In memory of Susan Morgan who died peacefully on 30th March 2010 at home - 8 Austen Gardens Dartford. Always loved, always missed by her children and grandchildren.

RICHARDS
Kathleen Constance Richards died peacefully on 3rd April 2010. Funeral service at Charing Crematorium at 11.20am on Tuesday 13th April. Donations to Cancer Research.

Letters continued from page 19

They still aren't listening

Last week's Opinion by Alice Sakura Dartnell and the letter by Edward La Coste both voice concerns felt by many of the electorate.

All the parties are telling us what they are going to do and ignore what we want. We've had enough of voters' wishes being subjugated by party dogma. There is very little debate any more, career MPs aren't interested in listening to their constituents, but vote according to Whips' directions, to further their own advancement. The unprecedented demonstrations against the invasion of Iraq being ignored and the resultant expensive mess, being a fine example.

So we have ended up with rule by Cabinet, or even just party leader. MPs are always talking about bringing democracy to Iraq and Afghanistan, when are they going to bring democracy to us? They pay lip service to listening, then do exactly what suits them.

There are many problems causing grave concern to the people of this country. The first party that has the guts to stand up for those concerns will be the one I will vote for.

At the moment they all lack the guts, or are too tied to their own vested interests.

Phil Granger, West Malling

Poland's terrible loss

I am sure I speak on behalf of all of us in expressing sympathy after the tragic deaths of the president of Poland and many other people in the air crash last week.

I know many in the local Polish community have been deeply affected and as they join with their compatriots in seven days of national mourning, our thoughts and our prayers are very much with them in this tragic loss for the Polish people.

Ben Bano, Deputy Mayor of Deal

We are all 'foreigners'

Another letter about charging 'foreigners' to use our roads. So we set up a scheme to charge, but who is going to get the money?

Kent County Council seems to think it will all come its way, but how about Essex, Surrey, or any other county council in Britain. Will they also think they are entitled to a share?

So it ends up going to the Treasury, which will decide who gets what. Probably about a third will be lost in 'administration' and most of the remainder will end up in the general taxation pot. Last year about £47 billion was collected in direct motoring taxes and about £9 billion was reinvested into the road system.

So why does anybody think money collected from foreigners is going to be used on the roads? Only last week, the Liberal Democrats announced they will cut the new roads budget by 90 per cent.

Foreigners may seem fair game for raising taxation, but millions of Britons travel abroad – and then we become the foreigners.

The writer complained about bogus speeding fines. But are we now not doing the same thing as the police target foreign vehicles? The anti-roads lobby recently strengthened its hold by allowing more cross-border chasing of fines.

It's easy for councils/police/mayors to make false motoring charges against foreigners to raise funds for any project – if the fines are directed into the local economy.

They know nobody is going to travel hundreds of miles to a foreign court with an alien justice system and argue their case in another language. It should also be remembered that EU quangocrats, want motoring offences in another country to also count for putting endorsements on your driving licence.

By all means try to get a fairer system, but anti-foreigner action is only going to bring retaliation.

Terry Hudson, Herne Bay

We need more Kevins

On Good Friday, I set off from Sandwich by train bound for Broadstairs. I had never been to this part of England before and had little idea of what to expect.

I walked along clifftop roads towards the North Foreland from where I was to start a journey of nearly 400 miles along the coast to Land's End – joining the furthest points east and west which are south of the Thames. It will take me most of the summer to complete.

Having checked my map, I decided I had found my starting point – and then I found Kevin.

I don't know his surname but he should be a local dignitary. He walked with me for the first two miles and pointed out so much I would never have known. The Thirty-Nine Steps, Bleak House, the Jewel in the Crown. All this and so much more of the history of Broadstairs. Apart from a military career, he has spent all his life in Broadstairs and is very proud of the town and its people. His knowledge of the best place to get a photograph, the best way to walk to Ramsgate and even when the rain would start (as it surely did) were all delivered with the same gentle manner – and I just want to say thank you.

If I could count on meeting a Kevin on every day of my walk, I am in for an extremely enjoyable summer. Thank you.

Peter Dixon, Princes Risborough, Bucks

Oliver's masterpiece

Finally, after years of getting it so wrong, Ashford has some art it can be proud of with the excellent new artwork painted on the side of International House.

I have been waiting with bated breath since Oliver Winconek first installed Nimby to see if he would be commissioned by the local authority to create something permanent for the town. Oliver is one of the key figures in the contemporary art scene so it's fantastic to be able to see an example of his work in such a public space.

He has taken a dark and grimy wall and turned it into a masterpiece. Fingers crossed it gets the recognition it deserves and Oliver is asked to paint more pieces in and around the town centre. His work is always a joy to see.

David Harris, Ashford

In for (nearly) a penny

The Government was going to increase tax on petrol by 3p per litre from April 1.

After receiving advice (or otherwise) from several quarters, it decided to phase the increase over three dates. The first increase was 1.2p per litre April 1. In Medway and Sittingbourne, petrol prices varied between 116.9p to 119.9p – always 0.9p!

By my calculations, if you add 1.2p to a figure of 0.9p, it should mean that the price of petrol should be 118.1p to 121.1p.

My question is: why did petrol stations, supermarkets and the like increase the prices by an additional 0.8p per litre?

Why do petrol prices always have to be something 0.9p. They work in decimal points and it can't be rocket science to price petrol other than 0.9p per litre. All this means is suppliers of petrol are ripping off the public yet again and making more profit from us to the tune of an extra 0.8p per litre.

Bob Holder, Gillingham

TLC for beloved NHS

Seeing the NHS has given all of us a world-class service for over 60 years now, and she's up to her eyeballs in debt, why shouldn't we, her past and present patients and service users, lend a helping hand by starting an NHS help fund. It could even lead the way to a national debt recovery.

The money is out there, all we need is the will to tap into it. We may well have taken the NHS for granted over the years and as a result taken it to the dogs, but it's not too late.

I am willing to start the fund rolling with an amount I can afford as a retired nurse. It's a leap in faith, but every journey starts with the first step. The Labour health minister who founded the NHS must be turning in his grave and wondering why the service is fast becoming a patient itself.

We owe her a little tender loving care now she is ailing under the stress and strain of modern lifestyles. Will I be a voice in the wilderness on this one, or could the NHS serve another 60 and more years?

Bob Bedwell, Sidcup

Chilling climate facts

Like Mr Granger, I get fed up with the baloney spouted by so-called experts on climate change. Worst of them is Al Gore, plus the head of the UN climate department who stated that the Himalayan glaciers would vanish by 2025. Both relied on incorrect information.

There are dozens of other experts who I suspect have more to do with claims for more research funding. It may be worthwhile for some of those experts to wait for the reports of the tests on the Kauri trees in the peat bogs of New Zealand. The trees have been preserved for 30,000 years and could give facts going back to the last ice age. Plus the experts may like to study the link between regular changes in the Earth's orbital cycle and climate. Also, is there a link with solar activity?

Mr Duff may be interested in answering this: in view of the fact the Earth's population before 1914 was under two billion (it is approaching eight billion now) and there were very few cars, fewer aircraft and no jets, why was the iceberg the Titanic struck so far south? The liner was at 41.46N 50.14W.

Doug Cheverst, Bexleyheath

May 6 poll is irrelevant

I think the three main political parties are an insult, not only to the people of this country now but, all of those that have given their lives to keep us a free nation.

Not one of these parties will listen to what the people want and they do not even have the guts to tell us all the so-called benefits of being in Europe. From where I and many others stand, being in Europe is destroying everything this country stands for.

The unelected and unaccountable government of this country is already in place in Brussels, so May 6 is an irrelevance.

RE Tucker, Sheerness

Salute to brave crews

I would like to invite the people of Margate to join me and fellow charter trustees on Tuesday, April 27, at 11am, at a Folded Wings memorial service on the clifftop by the Westgate Pavilion.

There we will commemorate the bravery of pilots and crew who lost their lives over Margate during World War Two and in particular, this year, the crew of the two USAAF Liberator, B24 bombers, which crashed in the same hour that day, on the Thanet coast, will be remembered, when the dog tags of one of the crew men, Lt Hafner, recovered from the beach at Foreness Point are formally returned to the representative of the United States Air Force.

The USAF has expressed support for the service and, weather permitting, there will be a flypast of F-15 fighters from Lakenheath, prior to the service. A USAF honour guard and Lieutenant Colonel Jeffrey Price, the Assistant Air Attaché, will be at the service, along with the Royal British Legion and other veterans' organisations. The parade, once assembled at Westgate College for the Deaf, in Sea Road, will process at 10.45am to the war memorial on the clifftop, overlooking the site where one of the Liberators came down on April 27, 1944, thus avoiding the town and a greater loss of life. For more information, contact the mayor's parlour on 01843 221704

Cllr Michael Tomlinson, Mayor of Margate

Liberal with the facts

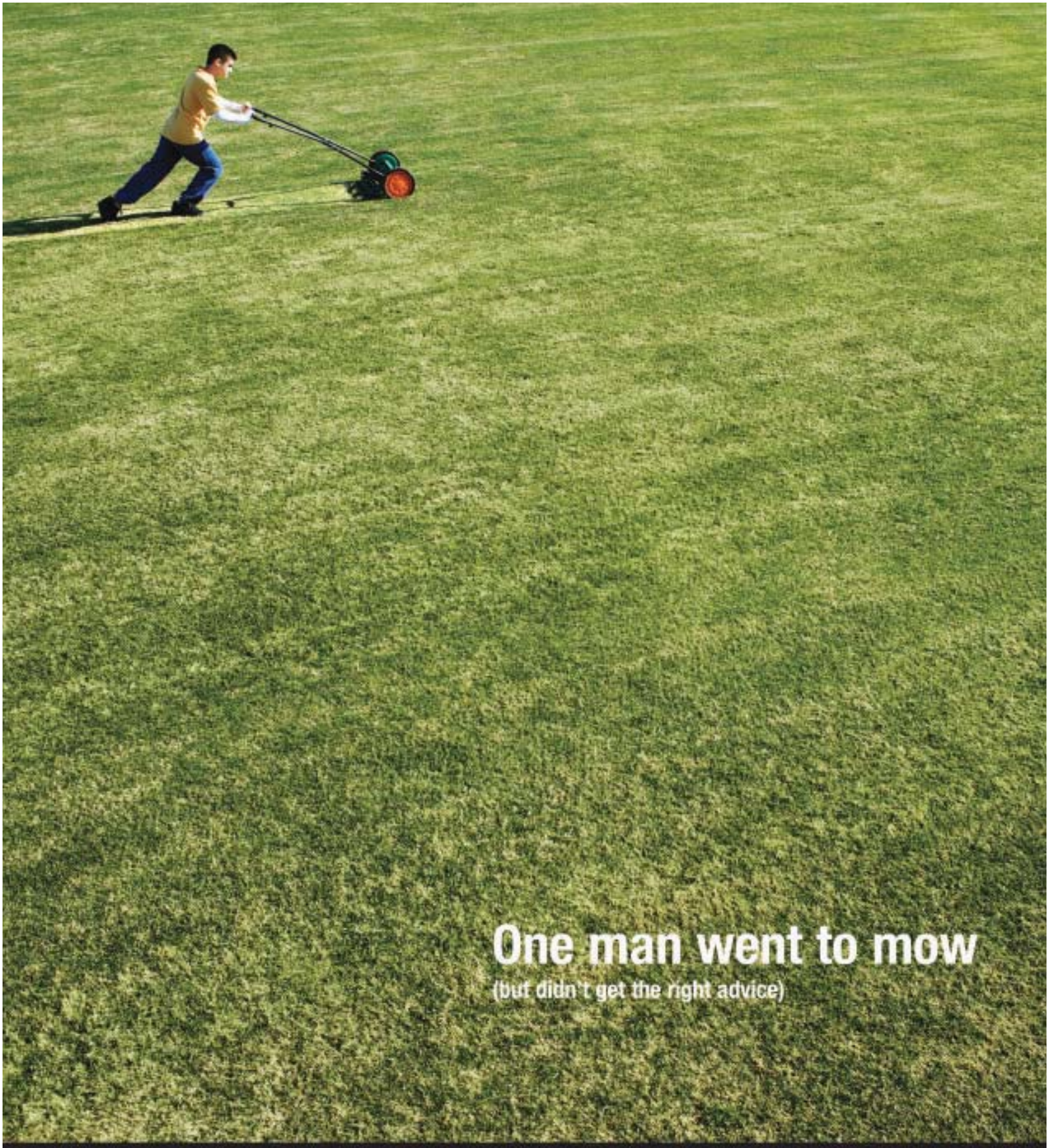
Thank you for publishing my letter ('All of the candidates deserve a fair hearing', last week). I need to apologise to you and your readers because my letter contained an unintentional factual error.

I wrote that the Liberals last held a seat in Kent at Sevenoaks, which they lost in 1924. However, in the 1929 General Election the Reverend Roderick Kedward, a nonconformist minister, won a remarkable victory in the Ashford constituency as the Liberal candidate.

His campaign was based on opposition to the compulsory collection of tithes for the upkeep of Church of England clergymen. The Rev Kedward lost his seat in 1931.

The Liberals also won Orpington in the famous 1962 by-election, holding the seat in two subsequent General Elections before losing it in 1970. But, of course, Orpington is now in Greater London. I do not think my error affects the opinions expressed in my previous letter.

Frederic Stansfield, Canterbury



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Painted with success

A PAINTER and decorator has been entered into the finals of the Dulux Decorator Centre's apprentice of the year competition.

Aron Baker, a first year apprentice at North West Kent College in Gravesend, beat 11 other apprentices to scoop first place in the Waltham Forest heats.

The 18-year-old, from Welling, will now have to compete against seven other regional winners in July for a chance to be crowned the 2010 Dulux Decorator Centre's apprentice of the year.

Aron, who had to successfully complete several elements of practical work, including wallpapering, said: "I am over the Moon to have won the heat.

"The competition was really tough and definitely put us all to the test, so to have been placed first is a real achievement."

International lesson

A GROUP of Malaysian students have graduated with primary education degrees after a joint initiative between the Malaysian government and Canterbury Christ Church University.

Some 129 students gained degrees through the scheme, which also received backing from the University of Hertfordshire, and Deakin and Queensland University of Technology in Australia.

The students studied at institutes in Batu Pahat and Kuala Terengannu in Malaysia, with primary teacher tutors from Canterbury travelling to Malaysia.

Sue Kendall-Seattar, from the Kent university, said: "The graduation enabled us to join together to celebrate the remarkable dedication and achievements of the students."

Canterbury Christ Church was selected to carry out the project due to its consistent high grading by Ofsted.

Take a new direction

TWO artists from the University of Kent are holding a joint exhibition at London's Canary Wharf.

Paintings by director of fine arts Angus Pryor and sculptures by William Henry, a graduate of the university's associate college fine art programme in Ashford, will display their work at the West Wintergarden from April19-30.

The exhibition, entitled Post-Conceptual Art Practice: New Directions – Part One, aims to show new perspectives on the adaptations of media by modern artists.

Dr Grant Pooke, of the university's fine art MA programme, said: "It's an opportunity to take a fresh look at how contemporary artists are revising the mediums of painting and sculpture in light of the ready made and the legacy of modernism."

The exhibition will include artist in residence days on Tuesdays, April 20 and 27.

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Gallery focuses on the T-word

By MARIJKE COX
marijke.cox@kosmedia.co.uk

A MICHELIN-listed chef has officially opened a new training restaurant designed for hospitality and catering students.

Scott Goss, who runs the popular Swan restaurant in West Malling, cut the ribbon at the launch of The Gallery at North West Kent College in Gravesend.

The new facility offers students the chance to work in a professional kitchen, giving them on-the-job training while studying for their qualifications.

And while they learn the tricks of the trade, guests, college staff and other students can enjoy their food, which is prepared under the supervision of highly-qualified tutors and served by trainee waiting staff.

Duncan Weetman, associate head of hospitality, said he hopes the launch will help forge links with other Kent colleges to share their expertise.

"We have had students working at the Cheltenham Festival from both Mid-Kent and North West Kent College," he said.

"We also want to build strong partnerships with local businesses to provide training solutions for their employees and, more importantly, provide good work placements to enable students to develop in the industry."

Mr Goss, who appeared on Gordon Ramsey's The F Word, already takes students from the college for work experience.

At the opening of The Gallery he spoke to guests about his own experiences as a young chef and the opportunities available to those seeking a career in the industry.

His appearance on Channel 4's The F Word saw The Swan earn a place among 18 top restaurants in the search for the Best Local Restaurant in the UK.

The restaurant was narrowly beaten in the semi-finals by The Pheasant in Huntingdon in Cambridgeshire.

COOKING: Scott Goss opened The Gallery

Speaking about professional cooking in a Channel 4 interview, the 39-year-old chef said fresh produce and stretching resources is vital.

"The idea of never throwing anything away is something that gets drummed into chefs in college," he said.

The catering course at North West Kent College has been successful in past years.

In 2007, 41 per cent of the catering students were in work and 46 per cent in full-time higher level study within three months of completing their courses.

For information about the courses go to www.courses.nwkcollege.ac.uk or call the college's free helpline on 0800 074 1447.

For more information about The Gallery, email thegalleries@nwkcollege.ac.uk or call Sue on 01322 629608.

To discuss placing your company's advertisement in this section call 01303 817056

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How to apply....

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For an informal discussion of the above post please contact Susan Wyles on 01233 639383 or 07725 433267.

An application form and job description can be downloaded from www.kca.org.uk or call 01795 590635. Please quote reference number 652.

Closing date: 7 May 2010. Interview date: 19 May 2010 in Ashford.

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Closing date: Friday 30 April 2010.
Interview dates: 13 & 14 May 2010 in Maidstone.

Administrator - Generic Structured Psychosocial Interventions (SPI) Service

£19,126 - £23,708 pro rata, pa • 15 hours per week • Based Canterbury

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Working in a demanding environment, you should have excellent typing skills and be confident in your ability to use Microsoft Office to a high standard. As the author of the Generic SPI service's quarterly newsletter, you will be required to demonstrate a commitment to keeping up-to-date with the key issues within the field whilst also using your own creativity and innovative approach to communicate the success of the service to external organisations.

The ability to collate and input data accurately onto a database whilst managing spreadsheets on Microsoft Excel is essential. You will also be able to demonstrate an accomplished style of communicating effectively with a wide cross-section of other off-site professionals in a factual and concise manner. You need to be able to prioritise you own workload and respond appropriately to referrals within the service's targeted deadlines. **Ref: 650.**

For further information about the post, please contact the SPI Functional Specialist Lead - Toni Howes on 01227 454740 or the Administration Functional Specialist Lead - Christine Gordon on 01795 590795 ex 2.

Closing date: Friday 30 April 2010.
Interview date: TBC.

Application forms and job descriptions can be downloaded from www.kca.org.uk or call 01795 590635. Please quote the relevant reference number.

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Scott Care Ltd

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Jobs for Kent continues on page 65...

it will never be just another job

mcch is a charity committed to designing and delivering services to adults with learning disabilities and mental health needs. It's people like you who empower each individual by giving them more independence and continue to be part of society.

Support Worker x 2 **Ref: 701/E**
£16,607-£17,494 Staplehurst, Kent

Robert is a 33 year old man with autism. He lives on his own in his own home but with the help of a dedicated team of staff to support him. He likes to keep himself active and has been known to run, swim, cycle, trampoline and roller blade in the past. Robert's friends describe him as fun loving and outgoing. We're looking to find two people to join our team & help him to keep building on a life that reflects his personality and the things he likes best.

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How to apply....

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...Jobs for Kent continued from page 24

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Closing date: Monday 3rd May 2010

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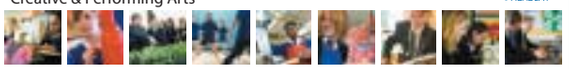

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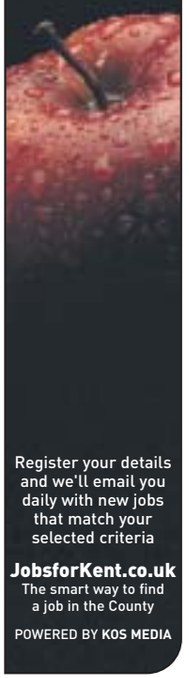

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36.75 hours per week, Term Time Only

To be responsible for the supervision and care of the students at night.
There will also be up to a maximum of two weeks for the school's respite care provision if required, for which extra payment would be paid. Due to the nature of the personal care being provided, Section 7 (3) (a) of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 applies.

For all posts we look for candidates who are mature, practical, flexible and responsible with a patient and caring attitude to deal sensitively with vulnerable children.

For an application form and information pack please call 01843 608727 (24 hour recruitment answer machine), or email personnel@bradstow.wandsworth.sch.uk

Please note that CV's will not be considered.

The closing date for all applications is 12 noon Friday 23rd April 2010.
Interviews will be held on 4th May 2010.

All shortlisted applicants will be expected to visit the school before interview.
All appointments are subject to an Enhanced Disclosure CRB check.

www.bradstow.wandsworth.sch.uk

MidKent College

MidKent College is a large and successful College operating on two main campuses serving Medway and Maidstone. Our new, state of the art £86 million Medway Campus is located next to the Royal School of Military Engineering where the College trains soldiers under a very large construction and engineering contract. The College was graded 'good' overall with 'outstanding' Capacity to Improve at its Ofsted inspection in March 2009.

Following the retirement of two of our longest-serving managers, we are seeking to recruit dynamic, progressive and enthusiastic individuals to join our committed leadership team at the Medway Campus.

Head of Faculty Advanced Engineering

Salary: c£46k

Manufacturing and Engineering have benefited from a substantial investment in new equipment and we are now looking to expand training opportunities within this area. In addition to providing effective management of the faculty, the successful candidate will be expected to lead on the development of STEM initiatives including a new Motor Engineering section.

Head of Faculty Higher and Academic Studies

Salary: c£46k

Comprising the A Level, Access and Higher Education curriculum areas, this Faculty is based at both our new Medway Campus and at the nearby University of Kent which accommodates most of the Access and HE provision. The successful candidate will have a strong track record of leading within these curriculum areas and in improving outcomes for students.

Closing date: Thursday 29 April 2010
Interview date: Friday 6 May 2010

Benefits Include:
• Benenden Healthcare • Pension • Generous Annual Leave • Flexible working

MidKent College is working in partnership with RBLI Employment Solutions to support individuals who have a disability or health condition. If you would like any further information regarding RBLI, or require assistance with your application process then please contact RBLI on 0800 783 1144 or visit their website www.rbli.co.uk for information, advice and guidance.

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure.

Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the HR department on 01634 383102 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number.

MidKent College is an equal opportunities employer

Action for Business College · Investors in Diversity · Positive About Disabled People · RBLI · Investor in People

To advertise in this section
01892 458204

Admin Assistant/Receptionist
required for June 2010
Delce Children's Centre, Delce Infant School, Fleet Road, Rochester ME1 2QA
Tel 01634 844127
Email: office@delceinf.medway.sch.uk

TERM TIME TEACHERS
TEACHERS AND COVER SUPERVISORS URGENTLY REQUIRED
MAIDSTONE, ASHFORD, MEDWAY TOWNS, THANET & DARTFORD AREAS
Call and speak with friendly, qualified education staff
Tel No: 01892 676076
website: www.termtimeteachers.co.uk
e-mail: office@termtimeteachers.co.uk

The John Wallis Church of England Academy (proposed)
Director of Finance and Operations
Salary range: £55,000 - £65,000
Applications are invited for the above post at The John Wallis Church of England Academy, which will open in September 2010 replacing Christ Church School, Ashford. The Academy will cater for 1050 students aged 11-16 with a post 16 provision for a further 250 students.
This is an exciting opportunity to join a newly appointed Principal Designate as part of the Senior Leadership Team to lead this new academy which will move into new buildings in September 2013. Candidates must possess an appropriate relevant qualification, have executive management skills, proven financial management skills and strategic vision and experience of working at a senior management level. This post offers tremendous scope for initiative, flair and creativity.
Closing date for receipt of application is 12 noon Wednesday 28th April
Interviews will be held Tuesday 11th May 2010.
Further details and application pack from jireland@diocant.org or telephone 01227 45940. If you would like an informal discussion with John McParland, Principal Designate, regarding this post please call 07852 236444.
www.proposedacademyforashford.org
Canterbury Christ Church University
BENENDEN

Make this your next mouse click

JobsforKent.co.uk
The smart way to find a job in the County
POWERED BY KOS MEDIA

JobsforKent.co.uk

Accountancy

Accounts Assistant

Ramsgate
Salary: Salary negotiable depending on experience
A flexible accounts person is required, particularly experienced in all aspects of purchase ledger including invoice processing, reconciling statements, weekly payments, with experience on computerised accounting system. Monday to Friday 9.00am until 5.30pm. Please send CV's to Alistair Mackay-Miller, Piper Double Glazing Limited, 140 Newington Road, Ramsgate, Kent CT12 6PP or by e-mail. We are an Equal Opportunities Employer.
To apply/more information:
Alistair Mackay-Miller
Piper Windows
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email ron@piperwindows.co.uk

Finding staff 24-7
JobsforKent.co.uk
To advertise in this section or online
01892 458204

Administration, Secretarial, PA

Service Admin/Telephone Support

Tunbridge Wells
Salary: £7.50ph
Invicta Motors are a rapidly expanding Motor dealer in Kent who currently represent the Ford, Honda and Mazda franchises across five locations. Due to a recent acquisition we are currently recruiting for the following positions within our Ashford, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells branches. Service Admin/Telephone Support at Tunbridge Wells (part time) Hours will be 1.00-6.00 pm with an hourly rate of £7.50ph The successful candidate will be responsible for sending service/MOT reminders, making outgoing telephone calls to secure bookings and post service follow up calls. If your skills match those required, we are keen to hear from you. Please send your CV to Mollie Cooper by e-mail mollie.cooper@invictamotors.com Or post to Mollie Cooper, Invicta Motors 59-61 Sturry Road Canterbury, CT 1DR Or telephone for an application form on 01227 762 777 Please state which branch you are applying for.
To apply/more information:
Invicta Motors
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01227 762 777
Email mollie.cooper@invictamotors.com

Service receptionist

Maidstone
Salary: £20k
Invicta Motors are a rapidly expanding Motor dealer in Kent who currently represent the Ford, Honda and Mazda franchises across five locations. Due to a recent acquisition we are currently recruiting for the following positions within our Ashford, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells branches. Service receptionist at Maidstone/Tunbridge Wells for Honda and Mazda We are looking for someone with excellent people and admin skills to work on our service reception. There is a £20K basic salary with the potential to earn significant additional bonus. If your skills match those required, we are keen to hear from you. Please send your CV to Mollie Cooper by e-mail mollie.cooper@invictamotors.com Or post to Mollie Cooper, Invicta Motors 59-61 Sturry Road Canterbury, CT 1DR Or telephone for an application form on 01227 762 777 Please state which branch you are applying for.
To apply/more information:
Invicta Motors
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01227 762 777
Email mollie.cooper@invictamotors.com

Administrator - Generic Structured Psychosocial Interventions (SPI) Service

Canterbury
Salary: £19,126 - £23,708 pro rata, pa
Closing Date: Friday 30 April 2010
KCA (UK) is an expanding and vibrant organisation providing a wide range of high quality and innovative specialist services in the drug, alcohol and mental health sectors. Administrator - Generic Structured Psychosocial Interventions (SPI) Service £19,126 - £23,708 pro rata, pa • 15 hours per week • Based Canterbury As an experienced and capable Administrator you will be able to work independently and provide efficient and high quality administrative support to KCA's Generic SPI service. Working in a demanding environment, you should have excellent typing skills and be confident in your ability to use Microsoft Office to a high standard.As the author of the Generic SPI service's quarterly newsletter, you will be required to demonstrate a commitment to keeping up-to-date with the key issues within the field whilst also using your own creativity and innovative approach to communicate the success of the service to external organisations. The ability to collate and input data accurately onto a database whilst managing spreadsheets on Microsoft Excel is essential.You will also be able to demonstrate an accomplished style of communicating effectively with a wide cross-section of other off-site professionals in a factual and concise manner. You need to be able to prioritise you own workload and respond appropriately to referrals within the service's targeted deadlines. Ref: 650. For further information about the post, please contact the SPI Functional Specialist Lead -Toni Howes on 01227 454740 or the Administration Functional Specialist Lead - Christine Gordon on 01795 590795 ex 2.
Closing date: Friday 30 April 2010. Interview date:TBC. Application forms and job descriptions can be downloaded from www.kca.org.uk or call 01795 590635. Please quote the relevant reference number. KCA (UK) is committed to the principles of equality of opportunity for all and welcomes of equality of opportunity for all and welcomes applications from people with experience of substance use or who have had previous problems with substance misuse. Charity No: 292824 www.kca.org.uk Progressive, Responsive, Effective
To apply/more information:
KCA (UK)
Quoting Job Ref: 650
Tel: 01795 590635
Email applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

Catering, Hospitality

WAIT STAFF

Ramsgate
Salary: TBA
WAIT STAFF wanted for fine dining restaurant in Ramsgate. Experience essential. Must be able to work weekends and evenings. Please send CV to info@ageandsons.co.uk
To apply/more information:
Age & Sons
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email info@ageandsons.co.uk

Assistant Chef

Canterbury
Salary: TBA
Assistant Chef required for busy country pub with good reputation for fine food Apply to Eric or Helen (between 9 & 12 noon) Tel: 01303 844663
To apply/more information:
Jack Daw Inn
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01303 844663
Email applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

Customer Service, Call Centre

CLAIMS CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE MANAGER

Folkestone
Salary: Competitive salary + excellent benefits
Closing Date: 19 April 2010
CLAIMS CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE MANAGER Competitive salary + excellent benefits Folkestone/Thanet Delivering first-class service is second nature at Saga. Whenever our customers make a motor insurance claim, we want them to find the experience as efficient as possible. That's where you come in. Splitting your time between our Folkestone and Thanet sites, you'll manage the performance of around 150 staff. That means driving continuous improvement by instilling best practice, setting targets and shaping strategies. And fostering a culture where teams feel empowered and motivated. To meet the challenge, you'll be a dynamic people manager who inspires others at all levels. Able to juggle priorities and meet deadlines, your superb project management skills will help you turn ambitious ideas into everyday processes. If you have what it takes, the career opportunities are outstanding in a fast-moving environment that's grown by over 50% in the last 18 months. Ready for action? To apply, please send your CV and covering letter including current salary to Alice Forsyth, HR Officer, Saga Group Limited, Enbrook Park, Folkestone, Kent CT20 3SE or human.resources@saga.co.uk Please quote reference SVS385/KOS. Closing date: 19 April 2010. saga.co.uk
To apply/more information:
Saga
Quoting Job Ref: SVS385/KOS
Email human.resources@saga.co.uk

Telephone Interviewers

Orpington
Salary: TBA
The Business Advantage Group plc. requires Telephone Interviewers (English and foreign language speakers) ? DAY AND EVENING short term market research projects ? Excellent telephone manner ? Prevous experience useful ? Office based – Petts Wood - Competitive hourly rates. Email your CV to: stevie.marrett@business-advantage.com
To apply/more information:
Business Advantage Group plc
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email stevie.marrett@business-advantage.com

Debt Negotiator

Bromley
Salary: £15,500 - £17,500 OTE Debt Negotiator – Bromley - £15,500 - £17,500 OTE (40hrs per week on a shift basis) Aktiv Kapital is seeking driven, ambitious, confident individuals in return for:- Ø Excellent basic salary Ø Performance related bonuses Ø 20 days holiday (rising to max 25 with service) Ø Employee discounts and offers (AK Xtras) Ø Employee recognition scheme We are looking for exceptional people to join us and help us deliver a world class business. If you think you have what it takes to join us please email your CV to jobs@aktiv-kapital.co.uk
To apply/more information:
Aktiv Kapital
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email jobs@aktiv-kapital.co.uk

Domestic

Cleaners

Tonbridge
Salary: TBA
Home Cleaning Company requires FULL TIME STAFF Tonbridge Based Company Mon-Fri 7.45am-4.15pm No Bank Holidays, Weekends or Evenings Drivers only 01732 359500
To apply/more information:
Merry Maid
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01732 359500
Email merrymaidsales@btconnect.com

CLEANERS

Canterbury
Salary: TBA
CLEANERS needed, Canterbury, Wed & Fri, 15:30 – 17:30. For details please call 01622 882492
To apply/more information:
Minster Cleaning Services
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01622 882492
Email appl

Education, Teacher, School

Part-time Teacher of Music

Aylesford
Salary: MPS
Closing Date: 19/04/2010
To cover terms 5 and 6 Aylesford School – Sports College is an innovative forward looking Specialist Sports College. We have a strong community ethos where we put the learner at the heart of everything we do. At Aylesford School – Sports College we can offer you:- • A brand new school. •Outstanding new facilities in all areas. •A highly regarded CPD programme with personal professional pathways. •A buzzing and vibrant staff who are friendly and keen to help one another. •A forward looking curriculum with individualised pathways for students. We are looking for a committed professional who:- • Can motivate students through the curriculum. •Has the desire to make the difference. • Is focussed on developing their career further. For an application pack please contact Miss Jill McKenna on 01622 717341 or email your request to jill.mckenna@aylesford.kent.sch.uk Please note that this school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
To apply/more information:
Jill McKenna
Aylesford School - Sports College
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01622 717341
Email jill.mckenna@aylesford.kent.sch.uk

CLASSROOM MANAGERS

Folkestone
Salary: £18,471 - £20,262 pro rata per annum
Closing Date: Midday Friday 23rd April 2010
CLASSROOM MANAGERS REQUIRED Hours: 8.30am – 3.30pm, 32 hours a week, term-time only (39 weeks) **Salary:** Kent Scheme 6 (£18,471 - £20,262 pro rata per annum) We are looking for people with excellent communication skills, the ability to interact well with both students (aged 11-18) and staff, the ability to manage a variety of situations, be calm and work well under pressure. The main role is to supervise and provide instruction to students in the absence of subject teachers for lessons provided. The Classroom Manager will also be responsible for carrying out other tasks that are related to the learning environment. Offer of appointment is subject to a satisfactory Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure. This school is committed to recruiting with care and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. For an application form please contact: Miss S Spratley, Pent Valley Technology College, Surrenden Road, Folkestone, Kent. CT19 4ED. Email: samantha.spratley@pent-valley.kent.sch.uk Tel: 01303 277161 ext 2218 **Closing Date:** Midday Friday 23rd April 2010 Interviews: To be confirmed
To apply/more information:
Pent Vally Tech
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01303 277161 ext 2218
Email samantha.spratley@pent-valley.kent.sch.uk

Head of Faculty Advanced Engineering

Medway
Salary: c£46k
Closing Date: Thursday 29 April 2010
MidKent College is a large and successful College operating on two main campuses serving Medway and Maidstone. Our new, state of the art £86 million Medway Campus is located next to the Royal School of Military Engineering where the College trains soldiers under a very large construction and engineering contract. The College was graded 'good' overall with 'outstanding' Capacity to Improve at its Ofsted inspection in March 2009. Following the retirement of two of our longest-serving managers, we are seeking to recruit dynamic, progressive and enthusiastic individuals to join our committed leadership team at the Medway Campus. Head of Faculty Advanced Engineering Salary: c£46k Manufacturing and Engineering have benefited from a substantial investment in new equipment and we are now looking to expand training opportunities within this area. In addition to providing effective management of the faculty, the successful candidate will be expected to lead on the development of STEM initiatives including a new Motor Engineering section. Closing date: Thursday 29 April 2010 Interview date: Thursday 6 May 2010 Benefits Include: • Benenden Healthcare • Pension • Generous Annual Leave • Flexible working MidKent College is working in partnership with RBLI Employment Solutions to support individuals who have a disability or health condition. If you would like any further information regarding RBLI, or require assistance with your application process then please contact RBLI on 0800 783 1144 or visit their website www.rbli.co.uk for information, advice and guidance. The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure. Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please email job.applications@midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the HR department on 01634 383102 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number. MidKent College is an equal opportunities employer
To apply/more information:
Mid Kent College
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01634 383102
Email job.applications@midkent.ac.uk

Head of Faculty Higher and Academic Studies

Medway
Salary: c£46k
Closing Date: Thursday 29 April 2010
To apply/more information:
Mid Kent College
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01634 383102
Email job.applications@midkent.ac.uk

Director of Finance and Operations

Ashford
Salary: Salary range: £55,000 - £65,000
Closing Date: 12 noon Wednesday 28th April
To apply/more information:
Ashford Christ Church
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01227 45940
Email jireland@diocant.org

Learning Support Assistant (AEN)

Canterbury
Salary: £14,311 - £16,225 pro rata
Closing Date: Monday 3rd May 2010
To apply/more information:
Spires Academy
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01227 710392
Email m.wigington@spiresacademy.com

Administration Assistant

Canterbury
Salary: £16,225 - £17,046 pro rata
Closing Date: Monday 3rd May 2010
Administration Assistant Academy Pay Scheme Level 4: £16,225 - £17,046 • 20 hours per week • Term time + inset Spires Academy opened in September 2007 and achieved excellent results and value-added in each of it's first two years. Student numbers in year 7 have doubled and we are rapidly moving towards our target roll of 600. Planning for the new building is underway and there is a real sense of optimism in our community, a 'can do' mentality. Following internal promotion we require an Administration Assistant to join our Support & Guidance Team. The ability to work well under pressure is essential as are excellent organisational, interpersonal and communication skills. For further details and an application pack, please contact Marion Wigington at m.wigington@spiresacademy.com or by telephone on 01227 710392. Closing date: Monday 3rd May 2010 Spires Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be subject to appropriate

Jobs by Email

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To apply/more information:
Spires Academy
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01227 710392
Email m.wigington @spiresacademy.com

NVQ ASSESSORS

Sandwich
Salary: TBA
NVQ ASSESSORS REQUIRED Peripatetic/independent To join our friendly team of professionals. Must be occupationally competent and able to assess up to level 4 in: Health and Social Care Children and Young people Adult Care Care Management Management and Leadership Please contact us on: 01304-614765 www.elitesocialcareprofessionals.co.uk
To apply/more information:
Elite Social
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01304-614765
Email applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

Engineering, Manufacturing, Utilities

Engineers

N/A
Salary: $100k - 200k
Contract based in Warri, Nigeria Pentro Drilling is looking for qualified candidates from various engineering field to work towards to fulfillment of our ongoing project Pentro Drilling is looking for Engineering & Aviation Applications of a highly skilled candidate who wants to get in on the ground floor of a very promising opportunity. The Engineering Applications will provide leadership to Engineering team and act in a lead engineer capacity. The Engineers will be responsible for making design recommendations based on customer requirements, as well as configuring and managing the assembly and testing of systems. Responsibilities: • Manage the daily activities of the Engineering function including prioritizing tasks, managing various projects and checking subordinate's work • Make recommendations for modifications of existing product catalog or for completely new designs • Utilize Solidworks to develop design schematics to be shared with customers, R&D and Manufacturing • Assemble and test configurations to meet customer needs • Carrying out quality control checks as defined on quality plans as directed by construction superintendent. Qualifications: • Bachelor's degree in Engineering strongly preferred. • 3+ years in a Engineering role and leadership responsibilities • Professional communication skills • Ability to discuss and solve complex problems with manufacturing departments, contractors, suppliers and customers • Excellent technical skills • Some background in extrusions, • Time and commitment to devote to a startup in high growth phase Benefits: Competitive base salary along with equity incentive participation, bonus plan and benefits including health care.
To apply/more information:
Tony Ayo
Pentro Drilling
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 002348039736271
Email careers@pentrodrilling.com

HR, Recruitment

SENIOR RECRUITMENT CONSULTANT

Folkestone
Salary: TBA
SENIOR RECRUITMENT CONSULTANT Top basic + uncapped commission Due to continued expansion, we are searching for dynamic & experienced Consultant with exceptional business development skills to compliment commercial division Telephone Joe Brady (01303 220099) for a confidential Chat or email your CV joe@rsfl.co.uk RECRUITMENT SOLUTIONS (FOLKESTONE) LTD Oak House, 115 Sandgate Rd, Folkestone, Kent CT20 2BL
To apply/more information:
Recruitment Solutions (Folkestone) Ltd
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01303 220099
Email joe@rsfl.co.uk

Management, Senior Positions

Claims Customer Experience Manager

Folkestone
Salary: Competitive salary + excellent benefits
Closing Date: 19 April 2010
Delivering first-class service is second nature at Saga. Whenever our customers make a motor insurance claim, we want them to find the experience as efficient as possible. That's where you come in. Splitting your time between our Folkestone and Thanet sites, you'll manage the performance of around 150 staff. That means driving continuous improvement by instilling best practice, setting targets and shaping strategies. And fostering a culture where teams feel empowered and motivated. To meet the challenge, you'll be a dynamic people manager who inspires others at all levels. Able to juggle priorities and meet deadlines, your superb project management skills will help you turn ambitious ideas into everyday processes. If you have what it takes, the career opportunities are outstanding in a fast-moving environment that's grown by over 50% in the last 18 months. Ready for action? To apply, please send your CV and covering letter including current salary to contacts below. Folkestone and Thanet areas.
To apply/more information:
Alice Forsyth
Saga
Quoting Job Ref: SVS385/KOS
Email human.resources@saga.co.uk

Motor Trade, Driver

Skilled Fiat Technician

Sittingbourne
Salary: TBA
ATA level 2 or above Fiat experience/training would be advantageous Please telephone 01795 423815 For further details
To apply/more information:
JG Burgess
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

Vehicle Technicians

Maidstone
Salary: TBA
Invicta Motors are a rapidly expanding Motor dealer in Kent who currently represent the Ford, Honda and Mazda franchises across five locations. Due to a recent acquisition we are currently recruiting for the following positions within our Ashford, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells branches. Vehicle Technicians at Maidstone/Tunbridge Wells (Full Time) We are looking for qualified vehicle technicians to join our busy Honda and Mazda dealerships. Top rates of pay offered with excellent bonus If your skills match those required, we are keen to hear from you. Please send your CV to Mollie Cooper by e-mail mollie.cooper@invictamotors.com Or post to Mollie Cooper, Invicta Motors 59-61 Sturry Road Canterbury, CT 1DR Or telephone for an application form on 01227 762 777 Please state which branch you are applying for.
To apply/more information:
Invicta Motors
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01227 762 777
Email mollie.cooper @invictamotors.com

Vacancies filled fast online with
JobsforKent.co.uk
To advertise in this section or online
01892 458204

Sales Executives

Kent
Salary: TBA
Invicta Motors are a rapidly expanding Motor dealer in Kent who currently represent the Ford, Honda and Mazda franchises across five locations. Due to a recent acquisition we are currently recruiting for the following positions within our Ashford, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells branches. Sales Executives Ashford (Ford),Maidstone (Honda) Tunbridge Wells (Honda) The successful candidate must have previous car sales experience, be ambitious, self-motivated and commercially minded with an aptitude to developing the business. If your skills match those required, we are keen to hear from you. Please send your CV to Mollie Cooper by e-mail mollie.cooper@invictamotors.com Or post to Mollie Cooper, Invicta Motors 59-61 Sturry Road Canterbury, CT 1DR Or telephone for an application form on 01227 762 777 Please state which branch you are applying for.
To apply/more information:
Invicta Motors
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01227 762 777
Email mollie.cooper @invictamotors.com

Not for profit, Charities

Club Play Workers

Thanet
Salary: Zero Hours
Closing Date: 23/04/10
Club Play Workers – Thanet & Herne Bay East Kent Mencap operates several youth and holiday clubs for disabled young people across the area. We are looking to recruit one more play leader and several play workers on a sessional basis for out of school activity clubs. Play Club Leader - YPL0001 Salary Scale £8.87 - £9.25 per hour subject to experience and qualifications Play Club Workers - YPL0002 Salary Scale £4.07 – £8.49 per hour subject to experience and qualifications. These posts are subject to Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau checks. Being holders of the Positive about Disabled People award, disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria will be offered an interview in every circumstance. The closing date is 23rd April 2010. Applications must be via application form. For further information or to request an application form please contact: Lynda Salisbury Office Co-ordinator 01843 224482 Lynda.Salisbury@eastkentmencap.co.uk
To apply/more information:
Lynda Salisbury
East Kent Mencap
Quoting Job Ref: YPL0001 & YPW0002
Tel: 01843-224482
Email Lynda.Salisbury @eastkentmencap.co.uk

Nursing, Medicine, Care Work

Area Manager

Kent
Salary: TBA
At Scott Care Ltd, we offer a range of care & support services for people who live at home & need help to remain independent. We hold company inductions on a monthly basis & our next induction starts on 4th May 2010. Now we're looking for the following to join our team: Area Manager - Full Time, Salary & Company Vehicle. Location: Kent You will be the nominated individual within the company, responsible for setting up new branches of our service. You will liaise with service users, care managers, contracts officers from the local authority & CQC. You will initially take on the Service Managers job description for each new branch yourself & recruit & train the new team. Candidate would ideally possess NVQ RMA Level 4 qualification or managerial background in care. www.scottcare.co.uk 0845 680 05 06 scottcare@gmail.com
To apply/more information:
Scott Care Ltd
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 0845 680 05 06
Email scottcare@gmail.com

Care Workers

Kent
Salary: TBA
At Scott Care Ltd, we offer a range of care & support services for people who live at home & need help to remain independent. We hold company inductions on a monthly basis & our next induction starts on 4th May 2010. Now we're looking for the following to join our team: Care Workers - Full Time (mornings, evenings & alternate weekends) & Part Time (evenings or weekends) Location: Medway, Swale, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells, Sevenoaks From personal care to helping out with shopping, you'll be a vital social link for those who rarely go out – or simply can't. You'll need a car & mobile phone, but we'll provide a uniform & pay for mileage. Experience isn't essential, as we offer full training. www.scottcare.co.uk 0845 680 05 06 scottcare@gmail.com
To apply/more information:
Scott Care Ltd
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 0845 680 05 06
Email scottcare@gmail.com

Team Leaders

Medway
Salary: TBA
At Scott Care Ltd, we offer a range of care & support services for people who live at home & need help to remain independent. We hold company inductions on a monthly basis & our next induction starts on 4th May 2010. Now we're looking for the following to join our team: Team Leaders - Full Time. Salary. Location: Medway With a team of care workers to lead, you'll supervise, manage & monitor their progress. That means handling care assessments, reviews, spot checks & more. You will be required to take part in 'on call' responsibilities. This role could be perfect for a care worker looking to take the next step, experience is essential. www.scottcare.co.uk 0845 680 05 06 scottcare@gmail.com
To apply/more information:
Scott Care Ltd
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 0845 680 05 06
Email scottcare@gmail.com

Support Worker x 2

Ashford
Salary: £16,607-£17,494
Closing Date: 26th April 2010
To apply/more information:
MCCH
Quoting Job Ref: 701/E
Tel: 0845 600 1552
Email jobs@mcch.co.uk

Community Support Worker

Ashford
Salary: £16,040-£16,896 pro rata
Closing Date: 26th April 2010 mcch is a charity committed to designing and delivering services to adults with learning disabilities and mental health needs. It's people like you who empower each individual by giving them more independence and continue to be part of society. Community Support Worker 12 month contract Ref: 705/E £16,040-£16,896 pro rata PT 20 hrs Ashford, Canterbury & surrounding villages We are looking for an enthusiastic, self motivated person to join our team working with people who have a learning disability or mental ill health. Applicants must be flexible, reliable and able to promote and support individual's health, wellbeing and independence. Experience in Learning Disabilities or Mental Health would be advantageous. If you are looking for a job that can be both challenging and rewarding apply now. A full driving licence and access to a car is required for this post. Closing date 26th April 2010. For further information or to apply online visit www.mcch.co.uk or email us for an application form at jobs@mcch.co.uk alternatively call our recruitment line on 0845 600 1552. Please quote ref. We also have large type/Braille versions available on request. All appointments are subject to a Criminal Records Disclosure.
To apply/more information:
MCCH
Quoting Job Ref: 705/E
Tel: 0845 600 1552
Email jobs@mcch.co.uk

Community DrugWorker

Kent
Salary: £21,519 - £27,849 pa
Closing Date: Friday 30 April 2010
To apply/more information:
KCA (UK)
Quoting Job Ref: 656
Tel: 01795 590635
Email applications @jobsforkent.co.uk

COMMUNITY CARERS

Canterbury
Salary: TBA
MERIDIAN CARE Require COMMUNITY CARERS in Canterbury Full paid training given. Competitive rates of pay with enhancement for NVQ qualified. Mileage allowance and full support given for both new and experienced carers. Own transport essential. For Canterbury, Deal and Sandwich call 01227 712300 Alternatively email us at MeridianCbury@aol.com
To apply/more information:
Meridian Care
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01227 712300
Email MeridianCbury@aol.com

Support Workers

Maidstone
Salary: TBA
Closing Date: Friday 7th May 2010.
Due to rapid growth we require Support Workers in Maidstone and the surrounding areas to work early mornings, evenings and weekends. Car drivers with own transport essential. Presland Care provides quality support to enable people to remain independent and live in their own homes. For an application pack contact Jane or Rita on 01634 673333. We are actively encouraging equal opportunities. Successful applications will be dependent on a clear Enhanced CRB check and two satisfactory references. Closing date for applications Friday 7th May 2010.
To apply/more information:
Presland Care
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01634 673333
Email info@preslandcare.co.uk

RGN (NIGHTS)

Chislehurst
Salary: £14.63 PER HOUR
Closing Date: 30 April 2010
To apply/more information:
RMBI
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 0208 467 0081
Email princegeorge @rmbi.org.uk

Public Sector, Social Services

PsychologicalTherapist

Ashford
Salary: £21,519 - £27,849 pro rata
Closing Date: 7 May 2010
To apply/more information:
KCA (UK)
Quoting Job Ref: 652
Tel: 01795 590635
Email applications @jobsforkent.co.uk

Retail, Wholesale, Sales

Sales People

Kent
Salary: TBA
Black Tie Foods Ltd Sales People required No experience necessary. Full training and vehicle provided. Call 01732 760484
To apply/more information:
Black Tie Foods Ltd
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01732 760484
Email blacktie@btconnect.com

Manager

Tunbridge Wells
Salary: TBA
Manager A role requiring superb sales skills, management experience and a strong customer focus. Bridal Sales Consultant A dedicated sales professional with retail experience to work either part or full time. Send a cv to: Go Bridal, 50 Grosvenor Road Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 2AS or email maria@ pantilesbride.com
To apply/more information:
Pantiles Bride
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email maria@pantilesbride.com

Bridal Sales Consultant

Tunbridge Wells
Salary: TBA
Manager A role requiring superb sales skills, management experience and a strong customer focus. Bridal Sales Consultant A dedicated sales professional with retail experience to work either part or full time. Send a cv to: Go Bridal, 50 Grosvenor Road Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 2AS or email maria@pantilesbride.com
To apply/more information:
Pantiles Bride
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email maria@ pantilesbride.com

Self Employed Book Seller

Kent
Salary: OTE £45K PA
Run your own exciting bookselling business with the UK's biggest direct bookseller! OTE £45K PA We welcome applications from both men and women Full-time opportunity Join the Book People as an independent sales distributor and you'll have the best of both worlds – working as your own boss with the support and backing of an award-winning company. • We help you set up • We keep your initial outlay low • We provide full training • Ideal for husband-and-wife teams • Huge potential earnings To find out more call 0845 606 4276 or check our regularly updated information pages at www.thebookpeople.co.uk/distributors
To apply/more information:
Index Books Ltd
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 0845 606 4276
Email applications@ jobsforkent.co.uk

Bookshop Manager

Sandwich
Salary: TBA
Bookshop Manager Position available The job requires a passion for books, coupled with a strong retail knowledge. Responsible for managing key performance indicators and financial targets Apply in writing with CV to Mrs Vance, 60 King Street, Sandwich, Kent CT13 9BL
To apply/more information:
Sandwich Bookshop
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email applications@ jobsforkent.co.uk

PUBLIC NOTICE

Town and Country Planning Acts

The Council is required to give notice of the following applications

10/01037/FUL **The Bull The Street, Benenden**
- Picket fence and chipping surface finish to external seating area (LB) (CA)

10/01063/FUL **Benenden Girls School Cranbrook Road, Benenden**
- Formation of hardstanding using grasscrete for the use of an overflow car park adjacent to theatre (permanent use). Siting of two mobile classrooms to provide teaching rooms to replace demolished Jubilee building (Temporary use) (LB)

10/01150/LBC **Mill Street Cottage Mill Street, Benenden**
- Listed Building Consent to retain lean to porch already carried out (LB)

10/00970/FUL **Oast House At Park Farm, Capel**
- Conversion of Oast House to detached dwelling with amenity space, car parking, garage and store, and access (LB) (PROW)

10/00971/LBC **Oast House At Park Farm, Capel**
- Listed Building Consent - Conversion of Oast House to detached dwelling with amenity space, car parking, garage and store, and access (LB)

10/01073/CAC **Cranbrook Engineering Ltd Stone Street, Cranbrook And Sissinghurst**
- Conservation Area Consent - Demolition of existing building in connection with redevelopment (CA)

10/01091/HOUSE **60 London Road Royal Tunbridge Wells, Culverden**
- Addition of rear verandah and new external steps/balustrading (LB) (CA)

10/01100/LBC **West High View Cottage Queen Street, Sandhurst**
- Listed Building Consent: Alterations to existing dormer windows. Replacement of existing upvc sash windows with timber. Refurbishment of existing tile hanging including insulation (LB)

10/01066/HOUSE **The Orchard London Road, Southborough North**
- Two-storey extension (CA)

10/00954/HOUSE **Langton Lodge The Green, Speldhurst**
- First floor extension and internal alterations (CA) (LB)

10/00956/LBC **Langton Lodge The Green, Speldhurst**
- Listed Building Consent - First floor extension and internal alterations (LB)

10/01164/REM **The Spinney Penshurst Road, Speldhurst**
- Reserved Matters (All Matters Reserved): 2 storey small two/three bedroom cottage in front part of site (CA)

10/01047/HOUSE **61 St James Road Royal Tunbridge Wells, St James**
- Single storey extension to rear and a flat roof dormer to existing roof on the north side at second floor level (CA)

(DEVPLN) Departure from the Development Plan (PROW) Affecting A Public Right of Way (CA) Affecting a Conservation Area (LB) Affecting a Listed Building (MAJOR) Major Applications (MAST) Mast Applications (EIA) Applications Accompanied by an EIA Statement.

You may view these applications on our website (www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk), at the The Old Fire Station, Stone Street, Cranbrook or at Gateway, 8 Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge Wells. We accept comments online, by email to planningcomments@tunbridgewells.gov.uk or in writing to the address below. Comments should be made within 21 days from the date of this notice, although we may accept them after this date.

You should quote the reference and be aware that we make all comments available for inspection, placing them on the file and publishing them on the internet. We do not publish signatures, telephone numbers or email addresses on the internet.

Jim Kehoe
Head of Planning Services
Town Hall Royal Tunbridge Wells TN1 1RS

Dated: 17 April 2010

HIGHWAYS - District of Ashford

GOLD HILL, WESTWELL
(PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because carriageway surfacing works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting traffic on Gold Hill, Westwell for its entire length on or after 21 April 2010 for an estimated period of one day or until such works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via Westwell Lane, Tumbledown Hill.

This order will come into force on Wednesday 21 April 2010, will be in operation when the appropriate signs are erected and will remain valid for a period of eighteen months. The order will allow the above mentioned restrictions to be implemented as and when required for works of a similar nature at any time for the duration of the order.

HIGHWAYS - District of Canterbury

LANSDOWN ROAD, CANTERBURY
(PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because ducting works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Lansdown Road, Canterbury outside property 11 to 29B on or after 5 May 2010 for an estimated period of 5 days or until the works are complete.

There will be no alternative route for through traffic. Access will be maintained for residents.

HIGHWAYS - Borough of Dartford

VARIOUS ROADS, DARTFORD
(TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on various roads, Dartford as noted in attached Schedule 1.

The Order will become effective on 3rd May 2010, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to last as noted in Schedule 1. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the route described above will be via: as noted in the schedule.

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate works as noted in the Schedule.

Schedule 1

Road Name:	**Westwood Road, Southfleet**
Extent:	South of Elm Cottage.
Date:	3rd May 2010 for 5 days.
Diversion:	Highcross Road and Betsham Road.
Purpose:	Murphy LTD will be undergoing electrical maintenance work.
Road Name:	**Whitehill Road, Southfleet**
Extent:	300m south of junction of Westwood Road and Whitehill Road.
Date:	7th May 2010 for 15 days.
Diversion:	Main Road, Green Street Green Road, Sandbanks Hill and Highcross Road.
Purpose:	Murphy LTD to install a new electrical supply.
Road Name:	**Highcross Road, Southfleet**
Extent:	150m south of junction of Sandbanks Hill and Southfleet Road.
Date:	28th May 2010 for 10 days.
Diversion:	Whitehill Road, Main Road, Green Street Green Road and Sandbanks Hill.
Purpose:	Murphy LTD to install a new electrical supply.
Road Name:	**Southfleet Road, Bean**
Extent:	50m north of junction of Sandbanks Hill and Highcross Road.
Date:	11th June 2010 for 20 days.
Diversion:	Bean Lane, B255 over A2, A296 Watling Street, take B259 slip road off, Park Corner Road, Foxhounds Lane, B262 Station Road and B262 Betsham Road.
Purpose:	Murphy LTD to install a new electrical supply.

HIGHWAYS - District of Dover

VARIOUS ROADS, DOVER
(PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because carriageway surfacing works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting traffic on various roads, Dover from as described in the schedule to this order on or after 23 April 2010 for an estimated period of one day or until such works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via as shown below.

Road Name:	**Coxhill, Shepherdswell**
Extent:	Between A2 Dover Road and Westcourt Lane
Dates:	on or after 23 April 2010
Diversion:	Westcourt Lane, Westcourt Road and Dover Road (Canterbury traffic to proceed in to Lydden Hill turn-off to turn round. Or - Eythorne Road, Shepherdswell Road, Shooters Hill, Chapel Hill, Coldred Road, Church Road, Coldred Hill and Dover.
Road Name:	**Barville Road, Eythorne**
Extent:	Between Pike Road and Dover Road
Dates:	On or after 23 April 2010
Diversion:	Wigmore Lane, Shooters Hill, Chapel Hill, The Street, Kennel Hill and A256 Whitfeld By-pass.

This order will come into force on Friday 23 April 2010, will be in operation when the appropriate signs are erected and will remain valid for a period of eighteen months. The order will allow the above mentioned restrictions to be implemented as and when required for works of similar nature at any time for the duration of the order.

WOODNESBOROUGH ROAD, SANDWICH
(PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that to enable Network Rail to carry out track maintenance, the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting traffic on Woodnesborough Road, Sandwich between 1.00 am on 24 April 2010 until 4.00 am on Sunday 25 April 2010.

The road will be closed to through traffic for a distance of 30 metres either side of the level crossing The alternative route will be west bound via Mote Sole, Cattle Market, Harnet Street, Strand Street, High Street, New Street and St Bart's Road; east bound via Woodnesborough Road, St Bart's Road, New Street Cattle Market and Mote Sole.

This Order will come into force from 24 April 2010, will be in operation when the appropriate signs and barriers are on site, and will remain valid for a period of eighteen months. The Order will allow the above-mentioned restrictions to be implemented as and when required for works of a similar nature, at any time for the duration of the order.

HIGHWAYS - Borough of Gravesham

B2175 LONDON ROAD, NORTHFLEET
(40 MPH SPEED LIMIT) ORDER 2010

Notice is hereby given that the Kent County Council proposes to make the above named Orders under section 84(1), (2) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, (hereinafter called 'the Act') and of all other enabling powers, and after consultation with the chief officer of police in accordance with paragraph 20 of Part III of Schedule 9 to the Act.

The effect of the proposed Order will reduce the length of 40 mph speed limit on B2175 London Road to the following length of road (extending the 30 mph speed limit):

London Road (B2175): From a point 12 metres west of the junction with Rural Vale to a point 33 metres east of the junction with Pier Road.

Full details are contained in the Order which, together with the relevant plans, any Orders amended and a statement of the Council's reasons for making the Order may be examined on Mondays to Fridays at the offices of Gravesham Borough Council, Civic Centre, Windmill Street, Gravesend during normal office hours.

If you wish to offer support for or object to the proposed Order you should send the grounds in writing to the Kent Highway Services, Double Day House, St Michaels Close, Aylesford. ME20 7BU by noon on Monday 17 May 2010.

VARIOUS ROADS, GRAVESEND
(TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on various roads, Gravesend as noted in attached Schedule 1.

The Order will become effective on 3rd May 2010, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to last as noted in Schedule 1. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the route described above will be via: as noted in the schedule.

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate surface dressing works.

Schedule 1

Road Name:	**Whitepost Lane, Culverstone Green**
Extent:	From its junction with Harvel Road to A227 Wrotham Road
Date:	7th May 2010 for 1 week
Diversion:	A227 Wrotham Road / Gravesend Road and Harvel Road
Road Name:	**Luxon Road, Luddesdown**
Extent:	From its junction with Leywood Road and Lockyers Hill
Date:	11th May 2010 for 1 week
Diversion:	Lockyers Hill and Leywood Road
Road Name:	**Leywood Road, Luddesdown**
Extent:	From its junction with White Horse Lane to Luxon Road
Date:	11th May 2010 for 1 week
Diversion:	White Horse Lane, Dean Lane and Strawberry Hill

HIGHWAYS - Borough of Maidstone

BUSBRIDGE ROAD, LOOSE
(PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Busbridge Road outside Brookfield on or after Monday 3rd May 2010 for a period of up to 1 day or until such works are completed.

The alternative route for the restriction described above is via Stockett Lane, Forstal Lane and Well Street.

BT apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works, which are necessary to renew a telegraph pole. Should you require any further information about these works, the contact is Tracy Zeal on 08700 500792.

WALLIS AVENUE, MAIDSTONE
(PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Wallis Avenue between Bell Road and Brishing Lane and approximately 50m either side of the junction with Longshaw Road on or after Saturday/Sunday 8th/9th May, Saturday/Sunday 15th/16th May and Saturday/Sunday 22nd/23rd May 2010 for a period of up to 2 days or until such works are completed. The closures will be undertaken separately as notified by advance warning signs.

The alternative route for the restriction described above is via Bell Road and Brishing Lane.

Walker Construction (UK) Ltd apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works, which are necessary for improvement works to pedestrian footways and construction of two zebra crossings. Should you require any further information about these works, the contact is Andy Pilcher on 01303 851111.

B2015 MAIDSTONE ROAD, NETTLESTEAD
(PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Maidstone Road between number 16 and Bishops Close on or after Saturday 8th May 2010 for a period of up to 1 day or until such works are completed.

The alternative route is via B2015 Bow Road, A26 Tonbridge Road, A228 Seven Mile Lane, B2015 Maidstone Road.

Kent Highway Services apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works, which are necessary to lay a service duct, carriageway resurfacing and Zebra Crossing markings. Should you require any further information about these works, the contact is Helen Cobby on 08458 247 800.

VARIOUS ROADS, MAIDSTONE
(SPEED LIMITS) (CONSOLIDATION) (AMENDMENT NO 3) ORDER 2010

Notice is hereby given that the Kent County Council proposes to make the above named Order under section 84(1), (2) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, (hereinafter called "the Act") and of all other enabling powers, and after consultation with the chief officer of police in accordance with paragraph 20 of Part III of Schedule 9 to the Act.

The effect of the proposed Order will extend the 30 mph speed limit from the existing termination point in Boughton Lane (approximately in line with the southern flank wall of 64 Boughton Lane) for a distance of 186 metres in a southerly direction.

Full details are contained in the draft Order which, together with the relevant plans, any Orders amended by the proposals and a statement of reasons for proposing to make the Order may be examined on Mondays to Fridays at Kent Highway Services, Double Day House, St Michaels Close, Aylesford ME20 7BU and at Sessions House, Maidstone during normal opening times.

If you wish to offer support for or object to the proposed Order you should send the grounds in writing to the Kent Highway Services, Doubleday House, St Michaels Close, Aylesford ME20 7BU by noon on Monday 17 May 2010.

WALLIS AVENUE, MAIDSTONE
ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984. ZEBRA CROSSING

Notice is hereby given that Kent County Council, as local traffic authority, and after consultation with the chief officer of police, propose to establish a crossing (Zebra) for pedestrians under Section 23 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, and of all their enabling powers, as follows:

Wallis Avenue, Maidstone:

(1) 40 metres north west of the centre of the roundabout at the junction with Brishing Lane and Wallis Avenue.

(2) 79 metres south east of the junction with Hollingworth Road.

HIGHWAYS - District of Sevenoaks

VARIOUS ROADS, SEVENOAKS
(TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on various roads, Sevenoaks as noted in attached Schedule 1.

The Order will become effective on 3rd May 2010, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to last as noted in Schedule 1. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the route described above will be via: as noted in the schedule.

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate works as noted in the Schedule.

Schedule 1

Road Name:	**Church Street / Noah's Ark, Seal**
Extent:	Between its junctions with Childsbridge Lane and Honeypot Lane
Date:	Works will take 1 day between 4th and 13th May 2010
Diversion:	Church Street, A25 High Street, School Lane, Childsbridge Lane, West End, St. Ediths Road and Noah's Ark
Purpose:	Surface dressing of carriageway
Road Name:	**Fawke Wood Road, Seal**
Extent:	Between its junctions with St Julians Road and Carters Hill
Date:	Works will take 1 day between 4th and 13th May 2010
Diversion:	St Julians Road and Carters Hill.
Purpose:	Surface dressing of carriageway
Road Name:	**Otford Lane, Halstead**
Extent:	Between its junctions with Shoreham Lane and A224 London Road
Date:	Works will take 1 day between 5th and 15th May 2010
Diversion:	Shoreham Lane and A224 London Road
Purpose:	Surface dressing of carriageway
Road Name:	**Rushmore Hill, Knockholt**
Extent:	Between its junctions with Halstead Lane and Norsted Lane
Date:	Works will take 1 day between 6th and 16th May 2010
Diversion:	Halstead Lane, Knockholt Road, Shoreham Lane, A224 London Road, A21 Sevenoaks Road and Rushmore Hill
Purpose:	Surface dressing of carriageway
Road Name:	**Crockenhill Lane, Eynsford**
Extent:	Between its junctions with Wested Lane and Sparepenny Lane
Date:	Works will take 1 day between 7th and 17th May 2010
Diversion:	Wested Lane, B2173 London Road, A20 London Road, Dartford Road, High Street Farningham and Sparepenny Lane
Purpose:	Surface dressing of carriageway.
Road Name:	**Eynsford Road, Crockenhill**
Extent:	Between its junctions with Crockenhill Lane and Crockenhill Cemetery
Date:	Works will take 1 day between 7th and 17th May 2010
Diversion:	Wested Lane, London Road, Goldsel Road, Green Court Road, Main Road, Eynsford Road.
Purpose:	Surface dressing of carriageway
Road Name:	**Sparepenny Lane, Eynsford**
Extent:	Between its junctions with Crockenhill Lane and High Street Farningham
Date:	Works will take 1 day between 7th and 17th May 2010
Diversion:	Crockenhill Lane, Wested Lane, B2173 London Road, A20 London Road, Dartford Road and High Street Farningham
Purpose:	Surface dressing of carriageway
Road Name:	**Noah's Ark / St. Ediths Road, Kemsing**
Extent:	Between its junctions with West End and Honeypot Lane
Date:	Works will take 2 days between 17th and 27th May 2010
Diversion:	Noah's Ark, Church Street, A25 High Street, School Lane, Childsbridge Lane, West End
Purpose:	Carriageway resurfacing
Road Name:	**Riverside / Sparepenny Lane, Eynsford**
Extent:	Between its junctions with A225 High Street and Crockenhill Lane
Date:	Works will take 1 day between 19th and 29th May 2010
Diversion:	A225 Eynsford High Street / Eynsford Road, High Street Farningham, Sparepenny Lane
Purpose:	Carriageway resurfacing
Road Name:	**Wested Lane, Crockenhill**
Extent:	Between its junctions with Crockenhill Lane and bridge over railway
Date:	Works will take 1 day between 20th and 30th May 2010
Diversion:	Wested Lane, B2173 London Road, Goldsel Road, Green Court Road, Main Road and Eynsford Road
Purpose:	Carriageway resurfacing
Road Name:	**Fens Way and Midfield Avenue, Swanley**
Extent:	Entire estate
Date:	Works will take 1 day between 21st and 31st May 2010
Purpose:	Carriageway resurfacing
Road Name:	**Lower Road, Swanley**
Extent:	Between its junctions with Top Dartford Road and Goss Hill
Date:	Works will take 2 days between 22nd May and 2nd June 2010
Diversion:	Top Dartford Road and Goss Hill
Purpose:	Carriageway resurfacing
Road Name:	**Sounds Lodge, Crockenhill**
Extent:	Whole length
Date:	Works will take 1 day between 27th May and 6th June 2010
Purpose:	Carriageway resurfacing
Road Name:	**The Meadows, Halstead**
Extent:	Whole length
Date:	Works will take 1 day between 27th May and 6th June 2010
Purpose:	Carriageway resurfacing
Road Name:	**Meadway, Halstead**
Extent:	Whole length
Date:	Works will take 1 day between 28th May and 7th June 2010
Purpose:	Carriageway resurfacing
Road Name:	**Deanery Road, Westerham**
Extent:	Whole length
Date:	Works will take 1 day between 28th May and 7th June 2010
Purpose:	Carriageway resurfacing
Road Name:	**Pootings Road, Westerham**
Extent:	Pootings Road / Spout Lane.
Date:	Works will take 2 days between 28th May and 8th June 2010.
Diversion:	B2027 Four Elms Road, B2026 Station Road /Main Road.
Purpose:	Carriageway resurfacing
Road Name:	**Wellers Town Road, Chiddingstone**
Extent:	Between its junctions with Hoath Corner and Hampkins Hill Road
Date:	Works will take 1 day between 30th May and 10th June 2010
Diversion:	High Street, Chiddingstone, Lockskinners, Wilderness Lane, Lockskinners, Chiddingstone Hoath and Hoath Corner
Purpose:	Carriageway resurfacing
Road Name:	**Chested Lane, Chiddingstone**
Extent:	Between its junctions with B2027 Penshurst Road and Wellers Town Road
Date:	Works will take 2 days between 1st and 12th June 2010
Diversion:	B2027 Penshurst Road, Mill Street and High Street, Chiddingstone
Purpose:	Carriageway resurfacing
Road Name:	**Coldharbour Road, Penshurst**
Extent:	Between its junctions with Nunnery Lane and White Post Junction
Date:	Works will take 2 days between 3rd and 14th June 2010
Diversion:	Smarts Hill, B2188 New Road, Grove Road and Finch Green
Purpose:	Carriageway resurfacing

For further information, please contact Kent Highway Services, on 08458 247 800 (local rate) or visit www.kent.gov.uk/highways

Kent Highway Services

SCHOOL LANE, HORTON KIRBY (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on School Lane, Horton Kirby between Three Gates Road and Forge Lane.

The Order will become effective on 3rd May 2010, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to last 2 weeks. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the restriction above will be via: Lambard Street, Mussenden Lane and Three Gates Road.

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate installation a water supply.

HIGHWAYS - Borough of Tonbridge & Malling

BUTCHER'S LANE, MEREWORTH (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Butcher's Lane between Beech Road and 183 Butcher's Lane on or after Monday 19th April 2010 for a period of up to 1 week or until such works are completed.

The alternative route for the restriction described above is via Beech Road, Beaufighter Road, A228 Malling Road and The Street.

Kent Highway Services apologise for any inconvenience caused by these works, which are necessary for drainage improvement works. Should you require any further information the Kent Highway Services contact is Jamie Finch on 08458 247 800.

NORTHWOOD ROAD, TONBRIDGE (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Northwood Road between Trench Road and Waveney Road on or after Tuesday 4th May 2010 for a period of up to 1 day or until such works are completed.

The alternative route for the restriction described above is via Trench Road and Northwood Road.

Down To Earth Trees Ltd apologise for any inconvenience caused by these works, which are necessary for roadside tree removal works using a crane. Should you require any further information the contact is Jerry Edwards on 01959 524623.

HIGH STREET, WEST MALLING (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010/11 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst an event is taking place on or near the highway the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on High Street, West Malling between the entrance to the short stay car park and its junction with Swan Street.

The Order will become effective on 25th April 2010, for the dates as shown in schedule 1 between the hours of 6am and 2pm, or, until completion of the event. The closure on 28th November 2010 will remain in place until 8pm. These closures will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place. Access will be maintained at all times as much as is possible.

The alternative route for the route described above will be via: A228 Ashton Way, A20 London Road and Town Hill.

The purpose of the Order is to support the Farmers Markets taking place.

Schedule 1

Sunday 25th April 2010	Sunday 24th October 2010
Sunday 23rd May 2010	Sunday 28th November 2010
Sunday 27th June 2010	Sunday 19th December 2010
Sunday 25th July 2010	Sunday 23rd January 2011
Sunday 22nd August 2010	Sunday 27th February 2011
Sunday 26th September 2010	Sunday 27th March 2011

LAKE ROAD AYLESFORD (PROHIBITION OF WAITING) ORDER 2010 ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984

Notice is hereby given that the Kent County Council, in exercise of its powers has made an Order under Sections 1 and 2 and 124 of and Part IV of Schedule 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, the effect of which has extended the existing double yellow lines outside of the new development site on Lake Road, Aylesford.

A copy of the Order which will come into operation on Monday 26th April 2010, an explanatory statement and a plan showing the extents of the scheme can be inspected during normal office hours at the Kent County Council Offices Sessions House, County Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XQ the Aylesford Parish Council Offices, 23 Forstal Road, Aylesford, Kent, ME20 7AU and at the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Offices, Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4LZ.

Anyone may, by application to the High Court within 6 weeks of the date of publication of this Notice, challenge the validity of the Orders or of any provision contained in them on the grounds that it is not within the powers conferred by the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, or of any instrument made there under, or that there has been a failure to comply with any statutory requirement in relation to the Order.

THE STREET, PLAXTOL (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on The Street between The Papermakers Arms to The Rectory on or after Sunday 9th May 2010 when required for a period of up to 1 day or until such works are complete.

The alternative route is via School Lane, Hamptons Road, Dunk's Green Road, Long Mill Lane.

EDF Energy Networks apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works that are necessary to provide two new connections. Should you require any further information about these works, their contact is Ed Spalding on 01342 413633.

SPELMONDEN ROAD, HORSMONDEN (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Spelmonden Road between the junction of Brick Kiln Lane to outside 3 Spelmonden Road on or after Tuesday 4th May 2010 when required for a period of up to 8 days or until such works are complete.

The alternative route for the restriction described above is via Ruck Lane, B2162 Lamberhurst Road, A262 Goudhurst Road.

EDF Energy Networks apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works that are necessary to replace overhead lines, poles and to provide a new connection. Should you require any further information about these works, their contact is Howard Farmer on 01342 413632.

For further information, please contact Kent Highway Services, on 08458 247 800 (local rate) or visit www.kent.gov.uk/highways

Kent Highway Services

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACTS – NOTICES OF APPLICATIONS

The following applications have been submitted to the Council and are being advertised for the reason(s) given in each case.

TM/10/00520/FL – Unit 2 3 Sheldon Way Larkfield Aylesford Kent ME20 6SF – Mrs Patricia Baquero is applying for change of use to a childrens learning indoor play area, two astro turf football pitches, cafe and associated facilities. Reason: GPI

TM/10/00648/FL – Little Berries Taylors Lane Trottiscliffe West Malling Kent ME19 5ES – Mr And Mrs Pratt are applying for two storey side extension, single storey front extension and associated alterations. Reason: CA HH

TM/10/00678/FL & TM/10/00679/LB – The Farm House New House Farm Kemsing Road Wrotham Sevenoaks Kent TN15 7BU – Mr R Spencer is applying for demolition of existing garage, greenhouse and garden wall and erect new triple garage, lobby extension, orangery and garden wall; alterations to the exterior of the dwelling; change of use of agricultural land to residential curtilage. Reason: LB HH

TM/10/00701/FL – Hop Pickers Yard Winfield Lane Borough Green Sevenoaks Kent TN15 8PX – Mr Gary Starling is applying for extension to ground and first floor. New covered way to outbuildings. Conversion of part of garage to amenity room. New replacement garage. Reason: CA HH

TM/10/00752/FL – Roughway Farm Roughway Lane Tonbridge Kent TN11 9SH – J I B Cannon And Son are applying for Agricultural Building to provide ambient receiving and packing area with temperature controlled stores for fruit. Packing and processing area for cobnuts, raspberries and plums, dispatch and administration office and staff facilities. Reason: CA

TM/10/00789/FL – The London Golf Club South Ash Manor South Ash Road Ash Sevenoaks Kent TN15 7EN – London Golf Club are applying for temporary erection of a marquee from 01 March to 31 December during 2010 and 2011. Reason: LB

TM/10/00675/LB – East Wing Ford Place Ford Lane Wrotham Heath Sevenoaks Kent TN15 7SE – Mrs Shirley Cooper are applying for Listed Building Application: New porch, canopy and guttering. Reason: LB

Reasons for the case being publicised:

LB Application relates to/affects a Listed Building or its setting
CA Application is within/affects a Conservation Area
GPI Application is of general Public Interest
HH Householder application - As this is a householder application, in the event of an appeal against a refusal of planning permission, which is to be dealt with on the basis of representations in writing, any representations made about this application will be sent to the Secretary of State, and there will be no further opportunity to comment at appeal stage.

These applications are displayed on our website www.tmbc.gov.uk – click on the button "Online Planning" (then View Existing Applications and select Public Access). You can submit your comments by emailing to planning.applications@tmbc.gov.uk (please quote the application number by the date set out below). Please note that we will publish a copy of any representations received on the Council's website, including your name and address.

Copies of applications listed may be seen during office hours (8.30 am and 5.00 pm Monday to Friday). Any applications within Hadlow, Hildenborough and Tonbridge are available at Tonbridge Castle, Tonbridge. Other applications are available at the office of the Director of Planning, Transport & Leisure, Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4LZ. Any representations should be made in writing quoting the application number by 9 May 2010.

David Hughes
Chief Executive
18 April 2010

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Latest Meriva 'ghosts' in with a Rolls-Royce touch

By **STEVE LOADER**

IT'S hard to see any swank appeal in Vauxhall's original 2003-vintage Meriva baby MPV.

It was a game little load lugger with clever features, but largely anonymous to look at and drive.

The second generation Meriva – available to order now from £15,495 and with dealers for June 18 – is the opposite.

It is not only wider and longer, but looks a whole lot more stylish with a distinctive stepped rear window line.

And the pièce de résistance is something in common with the latest generation Rolls-Royce Phantom and Ghost models: rearward opening rear doors for easier access.

Once known as 'suicide doors' this format was banned in the 1960s, though one suspects fashion had something to do with it too.

But the concept is back now, with modern safety features to prevent kids opening the so-called FlexDoors while the car is moving. The doors have conventional child locks anyway, but they also lock automatically at speeds above 2mph and a green light in the door handle goes out, indicating that the door cannot be opened.

If a door has not closed properly when the car starts to move, an alarm and dashboard warning go off, but if the car is in an accident, the FlexDoors unlock automatically.

Why go to the trouble? The FlexDoors swing open to an angle of nearly 90 degrees, vastly improving entry and exit anyway, but it is parents with small children who will see most benefit as they pilot the kids in and out and strap them into their various seats, boosters and so on.

Vauxhall also claims that with both front and rear door open on one side – the fronts open at a similar angle to the FlexDoors – it is easier to corral and manage the children in and out of the car too.

Vauxhall has also gone 'FlexCrazy' lately, re-thinking how interiors and storage work; the latest Astra impressed on a recent road test and we can expect the Meriva to exceed that by a long way thanks to the 'monocab' MPV design and those doors.

Vauxhall is quick to highlight easier fold-down rear seats, which can also be moved to create more boot, leg or shoulder room.

As expected, the engine line-up includes some new generation small capacity turbocharged petrol engines – the efficient fuel consumption and extra power of these boosted units rather rendering the normally-aspirated 1.4 unit surplus to requirements, though there are always buyers for cheap entry options.

However, even the racier, cleaner and meaner petrol engines may have a job ouselling the diesels, including a 1.3-litre capable of averaging nearly 60mpg and a ecoFLEX variant of this due later in 2010.

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207 Verve 1.4 3 DR

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Swappage Price:	**£10,095***

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The official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) and CO_2 emissions (g/km) for the 207 range are: Urban 49.5-28.5 (5.7-9.9), Extra Urban 76.3-49.5 (3.7-5.7), Combined 64.2-39.2 (4.4-7.2), CO_2 171 - 99 (g/km) **for the 308 range are:** Urban 49.5-24.78 (5.7-11.4), Extra Urban 74.34-47.08 (3.8-6.0), Combined 62.7-35.76 (4.5-7.9), CO_2 188-120 (g/km).

*Prices quoted are on the road and include delivery to dealership, number plates, 12 months' Government Vehicle Excise Duty and £55.00 Government First Registration Fee. Customer swappage allowance relates to savings against published list price of vehicles. Offers apply to vehicles registered from 11th March 2010 until such point as they may be withdrawn by Peugeot Motor Company PLC at its discretion. Offers subject to availability and on selected models only. +Your car must have been registered before 28th February 2003, be registered with the DVLA, have a current MOT test certificate and have been registered to you for 90 continuous days. For further information please visit www.peugeot.co.uk/swappage (PEUG34005)

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OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT FUEL CONSUMPTION FIGURES (LITRES PER 100KM/MPG) & CO_2 EMISSIONS (G/KM); LOWEST: C1 1.0i 12V 68HP 5.5/51.4, 3.9/72.4, 4.5/62.8, 106. .HIGHEST: C4 HATCHBACK 1.6 16V VTi 120HP AUTO 9.9/28.5, 5.4/52.3, 7.0/40.4, 165.

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Awesome everyday abilities of Nissan's 'Optimus Prime'

NISSAN'S GT-R not only looks like a Transformer robot, but metamorphoses seamlessly from supercar to everyday motor.

How many top performance machines can do that?

Of course, the GT-R does not have an everyday fuel habit – you'll be lucky to get anywhere near the combined consumption figure of 22.8mpg – but, in supercar terms it costs everyday money.

Prices start at £59,400, peanuts for the technology built into a car which has real heritage in the eyes of aficionados even if most UK consumers know little about its predecessors, variously labelled Skyline and GT-R (Gran Turismo Racing).

The sporty Skyline heritage can be traced back to 1964, but it was not until the 1989 GT-R arrived that the car was truly on the world motoring map and an Australian magazine coined the name Godzilla to describe its monstrous performance and ability – even then it featured four-wheel drive and steering.

The name stuck, and a reputation as Japan's one and only genuine supercar.

It still has monstrous vital statistics: full-time all-wheel drive, smooth twin-turbo 485 PS (478bhp) 3.8-litre V6 engine, 0-62mph in 3.5 seconds and a maximum of 193mph, twin-clutch automatic gearbox, three handling/ride settings and an ultra-low drag body (0.27 drag coefficient) with F1 car-style down force with input from Lotus no less.

DrivingReview

by STEVE LOADER
CHIEF DRIVING CORRESPONDENT
steve.loader@kosmedia.co.uk

Nissan GT-R

Unfortunately, there is another: 298 g/km of CO2 emissions puts Godzilla in the top bracket for road tax – a whopping £950 in the first year under the new system and £435/year thereafter.

On the other hand, if you've the wherewithal to afford one, don't need to fill up at Tesco for the extra points and couldn't give a stuff what people think of your stand on global warming, then you're not going to worry about the road tax.

You will hardly care either that your GT-R probably won't hold its value as well as a

Porsche 911 even if it costs a lot less when you consider all the extra kit that comes as standard.

And it is the ultimate statement for someone who loves technology plus a dollop of bespoke tailoring – the drivetrain is hand-built – and you don't pay a hefty price in convenience for it.

It is a 2+2, but I've seen far worse rear 'seats' and the boot is huge, while the cabin is far classier than I expected, with good quality leather seats and dashboard – I liked the way a section of that moves up and down with any steering wheel adjustment.

Above all though, Nissan's supercar is an eye-catching, entertaining and surprisingly refined car to drive.

Sometimes it is hard to just squeeze the throttle without the prodigious power making the car leap from the start, but it's just silky smooth on the power and gear-changing front after that, whether using full auto or changing gear using the steering wheel paddles.

The all-wheel drive set-up favours the rear in the best sports car traditions, but up to 50 per cent of the power can switch automatically to the front to improve traction and stability in tricky conditions – this is a sporting car that could have lived with the recent snow.

There are three damper settings to suit handling and ride requirements: R is for high performance, but you would need a track day to explore it; Sports is probably the default setting and had me constantly marvelling at the car's handling in relation to comfort; and then there is Comfort, which does what its suggests, but seemed superfluous when the mid-choice is so good.

Nissan won't import many GT-Rs, but each one speaks volumes for the marque's technical ability, ambition and confidence.

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370Z Roadster 3.7 Range: CO2 254-262g/km - URBAN 17.4-17.9mpg/16.2-15.8L/100km - EXTRA URBAN 34.0-34.9mpg/8.3-8.1L/100km -COMBINED 25.2-25.9mpg/11.2-10.9L/100km
370Z 3.7 Range: CO2 245-248g/km - URBAN 18.3-18.5mpg/15.4-15.3L/100km - EXTRA URBAN 36.2-36.2mpg/7.8-7.8L/100km -COMBINED 26.6-26.9mpg/10.6-10.5L/100km

*Finance available subject to status. Offers available from 01/04/2010 to 30/06/2010 in the UK to persons aged 18 or over. Guarantees and Indemnities may be required. Nissan Finance, a trading style of RCIFS Ltd, PO Box 495, Watford WD17 1FJ. Terms and conditions apply to Clear Nissan – please see www.nissan.co.uk or your nearest participating Nissan dealer for full details. Breakdown and services provided by RAC Motoring Services and/or RAC Insurance Ltd. All prices include first registration fee and first year road fund licence. Model shots shown are for illustration purposes only. Refer to dealer for exact specification. Information correct at time of going to press. This advert supersedes any previously advertised offers. Offers shown only apply to Retail sales types. Offers are available at participating Nissan dealers only. 370Z Roadster and 370Z shown have optional metallic paint at £550 inc. VAT. Models subject to availability. Nissan Motor (GB) Ltd, The Rivers Office Park, Denham Way, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire, WD3 9YS

DrivingPortfolio

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Image	★★★★★
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Reliability	★★★★★
How green?	★
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Best rival	Porsche 911

TheVerdict

DON'T LIKE: the hair-trigger throttle, which makes it hard to pull away when on best behaviour

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06 56 Corsa SXi 1.2

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Deposit	£99
Balance to Finance	£5896
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Total Amount Payable	£5995

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Bosses join row over National Insurance hike

By **STEVE LOADER**
steve.loader@kosmedia.co.uk

BUSINESS leaders in Kent have waded into a row about raising National Insurance contributions in 2011, if Labour returns to power after the General Election.

DEBATE: Miles Templeman

But while Kent members of the Institute of Directors (IoD) welcomed the pre-election challenge to Prime Minister Gordon Brown, they also took the Tories to task for belated backing on an issue the institute raised five months ago.

The IoD, which represents some 15,000 business leaders in the southern region, including Kent, has long believed that a National Insurance (NI) hike would harm an already fragile economy.

Chris Dodson, IoD regional chairman, said: "While we welcome the fact that the Conservatives have now decided to support a reversal, they are a little late to the party.

"And, while many leaders of big corporations have also thrown their hats into the ring, this should not detract from the stark truth that a rise in NI payments would be a blow to small and medium-sized businesses."

He quoted a survey of 1,800 IoD members where 76 per cent thought the rise would be negative for the economy, while 43 per cent went as far as saying they might avoid hiring new staff.

The IoD's established stance on boosting recovery and clawing back the UK's mounting debt is cuts to the public sector – contrary to the Government and New Labour position.

Miles Templeman, IoD's director-general and chairman of Faversham brewer Shepherd Neame, said: "A reversal of the NI hike, instead of taking money out of the economy, as some economists and politicians claim, would allow businesses to use those resources to increase investment and create new jobs.

"Clearly we need to get the deficit down quickly, but the way to do that is to grasp the nettle on public sector spending, not with tax hikes on business. Cutting spending involves tough political decisions but these will have to be taken sooner rather than later.

"The narrow debate on NI suggests that most politicians have yet to understand this point, or at least communicate it to voters."

There has been other heavyweight support from leading UK bosses and notably from Marks and Spencer's Sir Stuart Rose, who reckons Labour's NI proposals would cost his company £10m a year and was incensed by Mr Brown's claim that he and senior business leaders had been duped by the Tories' opposition on this issue.

Business news updated daily online
www.kentnews.co.uk

Kentish flavour to agreement as Prue cuts tearoom ribbon

RESTAURATEUR and celebrity chef Prue Leith has officially reopened the refurbished Garden Tea Room at historic Penshurst Place.

She also signed a unique agreement between county food quality champion Produced in Kent and Leith's – her catering operation at Penshurst Place since 2003 – expressing a commitment to use local produce.

Leith's has a history of support for local farmers, growers and producers as part of its parent operation, Compass Group's Truly British, Truly Local sourcing initiative. This enables clients to sell produce from suppliers within 50 miles of the site using its Truly Local brand.

Prue said: "We are delighted to continue to build our relationship with Penshurst Place with the refurbishment of this lovely tearoom, and to now take this first step of signing an agreement with Produced in Kent. We look forward to working together to bring more Kentish produce to the menus we deliver to customers."

Produced in Kent's Julie Monkman said its was the first such agreement they had signed, adding: "We look forward to working with Leith's to support this commitment to using more local producers at Penshurst Place."

Viscount De L'Isle, owner of Penshurst, said: "This is hopefully just the beginning of having superlative Kentish produce as key ingredients to what we offer our customers."

CUT ABOVE: Chef Prue Leith reopens the Garden Tea Room at Penshurst Place

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MONEY TALK

By **LIZ RULE**
Pharon Independent Financial Advisers Ltd

Salary exchange worth its salt

ONE way of saving and investing more money – that has been available for a long time but many do not take advantage of – is salary sacrifice.

Increasingly it is being called salary exchange, which is perhaps a better description as the system means you switch salary in exchange for another type of benefit. One method of structuring salary exchange is to give up a certain amount of salary and ask that your employer contributes the money to a pension for you instead.

The main advantage is you can ask your employer to add the National Insurance they would have had to pay HMR&C if it had been paid as salary to the pension contribution amount, as pension contributions do not attract National Insurance.

Sensible

Some employers may have pension schemes which are not flexible and some may not wish to adapt their payroll to accommodate such requests. But by asking, you have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

With both inflation and taxes likely to rise over the coming years, using the tax system to bolster your savings, perfectly legitimately, is a sensible move.

As an example: for an employee earning £24,000 a year, currently paying pension contributions of £100 per month gross, this would mean a deduction of £80 per month net from their bank account from their take-home pay. It results in £1,200 per year saved into the pension.

If that employee switched enough salary to end up with the same take-home pay as when they paid the pension contribution themselves – but instead had the pension contribution paid by their employer – along with National Insurance savings it would result in pension contributions of more than £1,350 a year, which over time will make a difference and for nil cost.

Seek financial advice if this appeals to you, but speak to your employer first to see if they are willing to assist.

Eurostar sales surge

NUMBER CRUNCH: Eurostar's figures added up to a first quarter sales surge after a troubled Christmas period

By **STEVE LOADER**
steve.loader@kosmedia.co.uk

HIGH-speed cross-Channel train operator Eurostar defied economic gloom by posting a five per cent sales surge in the first quarter of this year.

The revenue of £178 million compares with £168m for the same period in 2009, and was shadowed by a passenger rise to two million against early 2009.

However, it was not British and Continental passengers who drove the increase – travellers from overseas markets increased by 22 per cent – although leisure passengers travelling between the UK and the Continent went up by six per cent.

This more than offset a slump in business travel over the past six months and also delivered a psychological boost after Eurostar's much publicised technical problems during pre-Christmas cold weather.

The company had several trains break down in the Channel Tunnel and services were suspended for three days during one of the busiest and most sensitive periods.

The train firm is now attempting a restructure from a partnership between three railway companies – London & Continental Railways and the national rail operators of France and Belgium, SNCF and SNCB – into a single corporate entity.

Eurostar CEO Nicolas Petrovic said: "I am very pleased that we are moving closer to the new corporate structure which will streamline decision-making, deliver consistency of service standards across the three countries and ensure the business is well placed to compete in an open access world."

Eurostar also aims to better integrate its services with other Continental high-speed networks to increase the number of destinations offered.

A trial is under way with SNCF allowing Eurostar passengers to travel to Provence via Lille, using reserved coaches on connecting French TGVs. If customer reaction is positive, Eurostar aims to add other cities.

On the marketing front, a new leisure loyalty scheme has been launched, Eurostar Plus, giving cashbacks to passengers who travel on leisure tickets.

Mr Petrovic said: "While there is still uncertainty about the economic outlook, we have seen a big increase in leisure travel over the last three months, not just from the Continent but from overseas markets.

"We are also seeing growing evidence of travellers wanting to switch from plane to high-speed train for longer, connecting journeys.

"Ensuring our customers can enjoy seamless connections to other destinations on the Continent is a key priority and we are committed to making that experience easy and efficient."

To view, search 'Business' @ yourkenttv.co.uk

KOS Media Business Editor Steve Loader reports on news and views from around the county with his Business for Kent round-up at www.yourkenttv.co.uk

Apex move gets to the point

ABOUT 50 jobs are likely to be created by financial services company Apex Credit Management expanding into Kent.

The move adds more momentum to a positive trend in the finance sector since the start of 2010, said Locate in Kent chief executive Paul Wookey.

"Despite the economic climate, prospects for Kent have remained positive," he said. "Since the beginning of 2010 we have seen seven financial services companies expand in or relocate to Kent, creating 278 new jobs – a testament to the county and what it has to offer.

"We are delighted Apex Credit Management has chosen to expand here and, with its ambitious plans for the future, look forward to its continued growth."

Apex has its headquarters in Stratford-upon-Avon, but its Discovery Solutions division has taken a Regus serviced office at Kings Hill Business Park, near Maidstone, following aid from Mr Wookey's team. The new jobs will arrive over a three-year phase.

Paul Wookey

The company provides credit management, debt collection and debt purchasing services and will run its tracing department from the new Kent office.

Apex spokesman Jamie McGrath said: "Kent is the perfect location for our growing business – it has excellent transport links and is a great catchment area for our highly qualified workforce.

"Since moving into the new office, we have created 20 jobs locally and hope to employ another 20 people in Kent by the end of the year."

GROWTH: Philip MacLauchlan of Toolstation

Powering ahead with promise of new jobs

By **STEVE LOADER**
steve.loader@kosmedia.co.uk

FAST-expanding building product and tools supplier Toolstation has announced an expansion in Kent that will virtually double its presence and create up to 40 jobs.

It has identified Ashford, Gillingham, Rochester, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells as targets for increasing its network of distinctively branded trade counters, joining existing sites in the county at Beckenham, Canterbury, Dartford, Folkestone, Orpington and Sittingbourne.

Toolstation has expanded largely through online and direct call centre sales and these still account for much of its business but, during the last two years, trade counters have added to the company's overall profitability.

Toolstation specialises in a wide range of power and hand tools and light building items, selling to the trade and public.

But it is being quite specific about what's on its own shopping list and is well aware of the growing realism on commercial leases and rents, according to spokesman Philip MacLauchlan. He said: "We require premises of between 4,000 and 8,000 sq ft with car parking and loading facilities.

"We aim to open our new trade counters in a short timescale, so are working fast.

"We are realistic about the rents we will have to pay and our confidence in this market enables us to consider good length leases, including 10-year leases where appropriate incentives are provided."

He added the firm will be creating at least four jobs for each new trade counter and as any many as eight depending on location – all genuinely new recruits.

'Our financial woes due to lack of leadership'

BRITAIN and the world's financial woes have highlighted a lack of leadership in the business arena, according to Kent Business School's Professor Dennis Tourish.

The KBS deputy director of research was speaking after being made a founding fellow of the Leadership Trust Foundation.

The foundation is an educational charitable trust, dedicated to development and enhancement of leadership. The new fellowship celebrates its 35th anniversary and the achievements of people making a significant contribution to the study of leadership over the years.

Prof Tourish said: "This honour reflects the growing awareness that leadership is one of the most pressing business issues faced by most organisations today.

"We have seen with the financial crisis what can go wrong when leadership is poor, too self-interested or insufficiently aware of its wider social obligations.

"I look forward to exploring with the trust and its new fellowship network how leadership can be strengthened and improved in the years ahead."

Prof Tourish joined KBS in October, 2009, and has worked with universities in Australia, Norway and Ireland, and participated in master classes for high-profile business leaders in Scotland.

He has also worked extensively in the public sector and industry and is a sought-after speaker at professional conferences.

He is the co-author or co-editor of seven books on leadership and communication issues, most recently Auditing Organisational Communication.

Prof Dennis Tourish

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Spitfire ace plans two-pronged attack in Battle of Britain year

SPITFIRE Ale – one of historic Faversham brewery Shepherd Neame's most famous brands – has a new marketing manager for its 20th year and the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Britain.

He is Mark Miller and he plans a two-pronged assault for Spitfire sold in cask and bottle.

"I have two main objectives: to develop a strong national marketing strategy for Spitfire and to target sustained growth," he said.

"This is a landmark year for Spitfire. We've lots of promotions and events planned and are anticipating high demand."

Spitfire was conceived in 1990 as a one-off fund-raiser to mark the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Britain. Twenty years on, it is one of the UK's best-loved independently-produced ales, both in supermarkets and pubs, and continues to raise thousands for RAF and veterans' charities.

Mr Miller said: "We will be promoting cask Spitfire to the on-trade, with a new point-of-sale launch and promotions that will drive consumer uptake. We want to continue to extend Spitfire's permanent listings throughout the UK."

Mr Miller, 34, grew up just a few miles from Faversham, so is no stranger to Shepherd Neame ales and lagers, but his advertising and marketing experience extends way beyond beer, after roles at Toyota GB, Asda, Arcadia Group and Specsavers and well-known brands including Guinness and Smirnoff.

He said: "In 2010, we will be working hard to show licensees that Spitfire is a premium brand with its own unique character, which appeals to the kind of discerning consumers that every successful pub needs.

"We will demonstrate that stocking Spitfire is very good for the bottom line.

"The 70th anniversary of the Battle of Britain will also be a great opportunity to promote Spitfire and the FIFA World Cup tournament this summer offer an opportunity for all our brands."

MILLER'S ALES: Sheps' new marketing manager Mark Miller with a pint of Spitfire

IoP boosted by research

INVESTORS in People has been lifted by research underlining the benefits of boosting management skills and support, particularly in tough economic times.

The analysis, by Cranfield School of Management, combined case studies, a survey of more than 400 employers and analysis of information from Companies House.

A key finding was how working with the Government-backed IoP increased profitability by enhancing managerial skills, knowledge, experience and effectiveness through all levels.

It also inspired a high-performance management culture and an effective learning environment, both of which help improve business performance.

IoP South East's Trish Fraser said: "Employers take note: effective management at all levels improves business performance, so enhancing management capability will deliver tangible results."

Cranfield's Professor Mike Bourne said: "We had an open mind when we conducted this research, but the evidence is IoP is the foundation of effective management practice and a route to success."

Strategic step in composting acquisition no wasted effort

SIGNS of growth in the recycling sector have been underlined by an acquisition that will consolidate two Kent waste sites.

By STEVE LOADER
steve.loader@kosmedia.co.uk

Countrystyle, a leading waste management company in the south east and operator of a composting plant at Sittingbourne, has acquired organics recycling business TJ Composting, for an undisclosed sum.

The takeover brings four sites but, most notably, TJ Composting's south London facility in Swanley, which has planning permission pending for a 46,000-tonne-a-year anaerobic digestion (AD) facility for environmentally-friendly treatment of food and green waste and generating renewable energy.

Most green and food waste going into the facilities of the new-look company comes from local authority sites and trade material from landscapers, where it is then processed into nutrient-rich compost.

The compost is then supplied to ground maintenance contractors including gardeners, farmers, landscapers and horticulturists, as well as the company's partnership local authorities. TJ Composting MD Charlie Trousdell said: "We recognised some time ago that TJ needed to work with a larger company if it was to develop AD at its sites.

"When Countrystyle approached us with a view to purchase it seemed an ideal fit, especially with Countrystyle's strong presence in Kent and track record in developing organic waste treatment methods."

The move greatly expands the composting side of Countrystyle Group across the region, highlighting its growth through the need to divert waste from landfill and conversion into reusable materials or carbon-efficient energy.

"We are delighted with the acquisition and see this as an important strategic step in our development plan, which has seen the company grow steadily across the south east," said Countrystyle MD Mat Stewart.

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Basepoint's Budget bonus windfall

MANY Basepoint office tenants have enjoyed a windfall saving after the business centre operator changed its billing process due to new measures in the latest Budget.

The tenants' overheads fell due to increased business rates relief announced in the Budget, and Basepoint's pragmatic reaction.

The company's executive director, Brian Andrews, explained: "We changed our all-inclusive licence fee to one excluding business rates, having realised the majority of our customers could be eligible to take advantage of the Government's Small Business Rate Relief Scheme.

"In essence, more than 90 per cent of Basepoint licensees who were benefiting with Small Business Rate Relief will now benefit further, some with no business rates payable from October as the relief potential moves from 50 to 100 per cent."

RATES RELIEF: Basepoint tenants have enjoyed lower overheads

But he admitted there were also long-term benefits for his company, saying: "We envisage a wave of new licensees moving away from traditional business centres with inclusive rent schemes, and into those with rate-exclusive schemes.

"It's a turning point for some of the bigger players in the sector with inclusive-rent schemes. They will now have to rethink their whole rental strategy or face losing out to those with the foresight to be ready for the changes, giving the benefit back to small businesses."

Basepoint specialises in centres for start-up and small to medium-size firms. It has four Kent sites, in Folkestone, Canterbury, Chatham and Northfleet. It is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the ACT Foundation, a leading grant-making charity to those in need, including the elderly and disabled.

Franchise expansion continues

NATIONWIDE franchise Printing.com has shrugged off the recession and is aiming for expansion in Kent.

Sites in the county and south-east London have grown from one to nine in three years and territory franchisee for the area, Gary Morris, is targeting new ones for Tonbridge, Chatham and Woolwich.

Mr Morris, who set up Printing.com in Orpington five years ago, said: "A bolt-on franchise is a perfect way of boosting business for people like print brokers, digital printers, marketing companies and graphic designers to run in parallel to their business."

SOLICITORS across Kent raised nearly £23,000 for a Will Aid charity event by volunteering their time in return for donations from clients.

The money is still rolling in and has gone towards a fund of more than £1 million generated across the UK during Make a Will Month, from November to December, in aid of nine charities.

Nearly 20 Kent law firms took part – large and small – with major charity generators being Furley Page in Canterbury (£3,235), Hatten Wyatt of Gravesend (£2,610), Pengelly and Rylands of Tenterden (£2,555), Baker Macdonald of Sevenoaks (£2,375) and Buss Murton of Tunbridge Wells (£2,115).

NEW analysis of the charity audit sector has shown that Horwath Clark Whitehill (HCW) – with offices in Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells – holds the UK number one spot.

It follows research by Caritasdata via the latest published accounts of the nation's top 3,000 charities.

HCW not only audits more charity income than any firm, but also audits more major charities and has also added more new clients than any of its rivals.

Ian Weekes, partner at HCW in Kent, said: "Charities are facing new times and new challenges. They recognise the importance of deep sector specialism and the value of working with a firm where the charity sector is an important part of the firm's business.

"This [Caritasdata] analysis follows on from the recent Accountancy Age survey, which listed us as number one for fair fees, and is an endorsement of our approach to invest in developing the largest and fastest growing team of charity auditors."

FUTURE entrepreneurs can experience their own Dragons' Den-style interrogation at an event in Maidstone next month.

Finance South East – the regional funding organisation managing the Kent Investor Club – and the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), is fielding local high-potential investment opportunities within Kent on May 13, at the Tudor Marriott hotel in Maidstone.

ENTRIES for the south east's most enterprising place must be in by May 31, say organisers of the Enterprising Britain 2010 competition.

Led by the South East England Development Agency (Seeda), the competition rewards cities, villages, towns and neighbourhoods that are creating jobs, boosting business and nurturing entrepreneurial talent despite the recession.

Susan Priest of Seeda said: "The Enterprising Britain competition provides the south east with a chance to shout about what the region has achieved and help other organisations and communities to learn from our successes.

"I urge everyone working on innovative projects in the south east that have used entrepreneurial spirit to transform their area to enter."

A regional winner will be chosen in June, with the chance to attend a national final later in the year.

Kent took the regional honours last year with Chatham Historic Dockyard. Chief executive Bill Ferris said: "Winning in 2009 really raised the profile of the Dockyard in its 25th anniversary year, and boosted all the organisations working to regenerate this area."

Enterprising Britain is free to enter. To register interest, email details to enterprisingbritain@enterpriseuk.org.

HOLDING PATTERN: The General Election has led to the deadline for Lydd Airport's referral decision being delayed until June

National poll sees take-off delayed again

AIRPORT chiefs at Lydd have suffered a further setback to their £25 million expansion plans for the Romney Marsh site, ***writes business editor Steve Loader***.

The Government Office for the South East (GOSE) originally set a deadline for Thursday, April 22, on whether to refer the proposed new terminal building and runway extension scheme to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

But disappointed airport administrators heard this week that the referral decision had now been deferred until June 11, because of the general election on May 6.

The airport's managing director, Jonathan Gordon, said: "It's regrettable that our multi-million-pound investment plans, which will help boost the economic fortunes of Romney Marsh and create 500 jobs, are on hold again.

"We have already spent more than four years and nearly £2m in painstakingly preparing our applications, which the democratically elected members of Shepway District Council voted overwhelmingly to support at their meeting on March 3, so the prospect of waiting until the summer for a decision is exasperating.

Compelling case

"Despite this, we remain confident that the Secretary of State will agree we have put forward a compelling case for allowing the controlled development of the airport."

After a stormy seven-hour meeting, Shepway council voted by 27 to 12 to allow the construction of a 294-metre runway extension plus a 150-metre starter extension and a new terminal capable of handling up to 500,000 passengers a year.

The airport is currently used mostly by small private aircraft, though there is a regular service to Le Touquet and plans for a similar operation to Jersey from July, but it is a long way from the 1950s and 60s when specially adapted aircraft carried cars and passengers across the Channel to Le Touquet and neighbouring upmarket resorts.

With costs and overheads soaring at London's main airports, Lydd – or London Ashford as the management prefers – hopes it can join other small regional airports operating medium-haul flights, using Boeing 737 and equivalent Airbus aircraft like those operated by Ryanair and EasyJet.

But the scheme has been dogged by protests on environmental and wildlife grounds, while the anti-campaign has also used the site's potentially hazardous proximity to Dungeness nuclear power station as a further support for its arguments.

Copier firm to duplicate turnover in five years

COPIERS and printers specialist KPS Business Solutions has defied the recession and embarked on ambitious expansion.

Underlining a plan to double its £5.5 million a year turnover within five years, the company has relocated from Quarry Wood, Aylesford, to new premises in Maidstone, where it has acquired the freehold of a unit on the Viewpoint business park and trebled its working space.

KPS Business Solutions is one of Konica Minolta's largest dealership partners in the UK and one of only a handful to achieve five-star accreditation status.

Diversify

It sells and maintains digital imaging systems in London and the south east, as well as providing print on demand and copy shop services.

The company also diversified recently into mailroom equipment, including franking machines.

Company MD Mark Burnett said: "We have a clear road map for the company's future based on the customer service ethic that has driven our success to date.

"In the teeth of the worst recession in decades, KPS Business Solutions has continued to grow and prosper because we provide our customers with a service offering that is fast, focused, friendly and flexible."

Injured seamers miss Kent opener

By GLENN PEARSON

KENT travelled to Trent Bridge for this week's opening LV= County Championship game against Nottinghamshire without seam bowlers Robbie Joseph and Dewald Nel.

Head coach Paul Farbrace decided against risking the pair for the Division One clash, which started on Thursday, as both have been struggling with injury.

Fast bowler Joseph stayed at St Lawrence to work on his fitness as he begins the road to recovery having had shoulder surgery last year.

Also missing was new signing Dewald Nel who was named in the side for the pre-season game against Loughborough UCCE that finished on Monday, but wasn't able to play due to a back injury.

The Scotland international suffered a sore back which has been put down to an eight-hour drive back to the county from Edinburgh last week and as a result, wasn't risked for the Notts game.

Sore

Farbrace said: "He had an eight-hour drive last Wednesday, then bowled on Thursday, Friday and Saturday and before the game he practised.

"While we were batting he was sat around and he said he felt a bit sore and stiff and put that down to the long drive. On Sunday he was no better so we decided it was pointless risking him in the game."

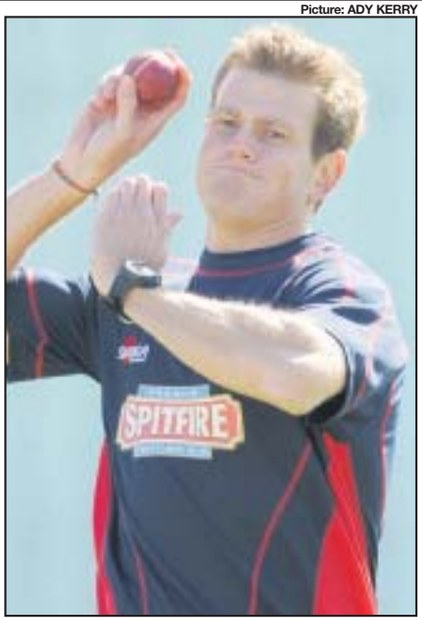
Farbrace was hopeful that both Nel and Joseph could be available for selection in next week's championship game against Yorkshire.

Joseph could have been available for this championship game, but the coaching staff have wisely decided against rushing him back and will re-introduce him to the side when he is ready.

"It is a long season and we don't want to rush him in," Farbrace said. "He probably could play but I think we are being on the cautious side and will look after him the best we can."

• ***For an interview with Robbie Joseph and further Kent cricket news, pick up a copy of tomorrow's newspaper.***

Picture: ADY KERRY



STRUGGLING: Dewald Nel's back stiffened up after an eight-hour drive from Scotland to Kent

Coach fancies his young Suns to tame the Wildcats

SEVENOAKS Suns play what head coach Len Busch describes as their biggest match of the season when Nottingham Wildcats visit for tomorrow's women's under-18 play-off tie.

Wildcats pipped the Suns 72-71 earlier in the season and revenge will be in the air when the two confront each other again on Sunday.

"I can't think of a bigger game this season and it's one we're relishing," Busch said. "They've got a couple of internationals in their side but we have no fear, having taken them so close before."

Busch admitted to being unsure as to which Nottingham side will turn up as the match conflicts with an under-16 game in which several of the Wildcats players are involved in.

Preparation has not been an issue for the Suns, unlike the previous week when international commitments took priority before the club's senior women's side's match against UWIC Archers.

Busch also had to spend time in the Midlands assisting with England coaching.

"We've trained all week, so there are no problems on that front," Busch said. "We're fully fit and fully prepared."

As expected, the senior women lost against the Archers in their attempt to progress in their play-offs, slipping to a 99-68 defeat in the quarter-finals in Cardiff.

The inexperienced Suns side contained five under-18 players, one under-14 and three seniors against opponents who finished runners-up having lost just three of their 20 league fixtures. The Suns finished their regular season in seventh place.

"In the circumstances the team did well," Busch said. "We made a bad start, falling behind 21-8 early on and though we regrouped, we gave ourselves too much of a mountain to climb."

Last weekend's top-scorer, Renee Busch, hit 18 points, followed by Maisie Elston (14) and Femi Hamilton (11).

Busch declared himself satisfied with the club's progress. "We've been going for five years and everything is coming along nicely.

"We are learning all the time, which is important."

Picture: NICK DUNGAN

WELL PREPARED: Len Busch says Suns under-18s are ready for their play-off game

Picture: NICK DUNGAN

TRUCK RUCK: Brands Hatch hosts the second round of the British Truck Racing Championship

Oliver wants Brands title

THE world's fastest trucks are set to do battle at Brands Hatch this weekend in the second round of the British Truck Racing Championship.

The Kent circuit will once again play host to the championship, which provides some of the closest racing around the 1.2-mile Indy circuit.

The five-tonne trucks are equipped with the same amount of horsepower as a Bugatti Veyron and can reach speeds of 100mph, even around the tight Kent circuit.

Stuart Oliver has dominated the championship in the past with nine titles to his name. The 47-year-old from Northumberland is aiming for an unprecedented 10th crown and is on course as he leads the championship after a perfect double at the opening round in Pembrey, Wales.

Brothers Graham and Steven Powell will use their local knowledge to their advantage as they search for a home win in Class B. Graham, who lives in Aylesford, leads the Class B standings after he recorded a double win at Pembrey. Steven Powell, from West Kingsdown, is also in form after a podium last time out.

In addition to the door-to-door racing of the trucks, the circuit will host a round of the Dunlop Motorsport News Saloon Car Championships.

Reigning champion Rod Birley, also from West Kingsdown, will take to the track in his Ford Escort World Rally Car.

The experienced saloon car racer has won multiple titles and reached the milestone of 500 career wins last season.

Brands Hatch has been a happy hunting ground in the past for him and included two race victories from the opening round of the championship last month.

*£1 Deposit is only available when you finance your car through Waters AutoPlanet. †0% Finance available over maximum of 12 months with minimum 50% deposit. Waters AutoPlanet are licensed credit brokers and are authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority. Finance is subject to status, guarantees/indemnities may be required. Terms and Conditions apply. (Applicants must be over 18). Written details available on request. These offers are available on selected vehicles only. Cars shown for illustrative purposes only. All prices correct at time of going to press. ‡Selected vehicles within ANCILtd group stock are cheaper than Parker's franchise retail price for a nearest mileage and specification match. Offers must end Election Day.

NON-LEAGUE PREVIEW By Tom Howard

Points pressure for clubs in fight for play-offs and battle to avoid the drop

WITH the Ryman Premier League title wrapped up by Kent side Dartford, the focus switches to the race for the play-offs and the battle to avoid relegation.

Tonbridge Angels are in with a shout of securing a place in the top five, but at the foot of the table Margate and Maidstone desperately need points to avoid the drop. In Ryman South, it is still all to play for as the season reaches its climax.

RYMAN DIVISION ONE SOUTH

Carshalton Athletic v Cray Wanderers

CRAY Wanderers could be on the verge of breaking into the division's top 10 if they can find a way past relegation-threatened Carshalton Athletic this afternoon.

The Wands have hauled themselves out of the relegation scrap after an impressive run of three wins from their last four league games. Athletic are by no means guaranteed a place in the division next season and will be fighting for their lives to steer clear of relegation.

Dartford v Aveley

CELEBRATIONS are likely to dominate the day at Princes Park as newly crowned champions Dartford entertain Aveley.

An impressive 6-2 win at second-placed Kingstonian last Saturday sealed the title and Darts plan to enjoy their remaining games of the season.

Maidstone United v Ashford Town (Mx)

MAIDSTONE United could move out of the relegation zone this afternoon if they clinch back-to-back wins for only the second time this season, against Ashford Town of Middlesex.

The Stones recorded a crucial 2-0 win against Waltham Abbey on Tuesday which ended their 10-game winless run, but they need to build on that if they are to stay up this season.

Tonbridge Angels v Boreham Wood

LEE Minshull should return this afternoon for Tonbridge Angels as their play-off push continues at home to fellow promotion challengers Boreham Wood.

The Angels are one of the division's form sides and the result from today's clash with Boreham could go some way in deciding the play-off picture. Striker Meshach Nugent could feature after recovering from injury.

Tooting & Mitcham v Margate

MARGATE aim to put their survival bid back on track after last Saturday's crushing 3-2 defeat against Aveley.

Gate boss Iain O'Connell is convinced his side are good enough to stay in the division, but they will need to pick up results fast to beat the drop.

Pictures: DAVE COULDRIDGE AND STEVE TERRELL

DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS: (l-r) Tonbridge Angels are eyeing a play-off spot, while Maidstone are battling against relegation

RYMAN DIVISION ONE SOUTH

Chatham Town v Walton & Hersham

WITH only one point from their last eight games, Chatham Town continue to fall down the division and will be eager to arrest their slide at Maidstone Road today.

The Chats are without a win since March 13 when they beat Ramsgate 3-2. Defender Richard Avery should return to the side after injury.

Corinthian Casuals v Whitstable Town

WITH relegation still a danger, Whitstable Town need to pick up as many points as possible from their remaining games of the season.

After a 3-3 draw against high-flying Worthing on Tuesday, the Oystermen have shown they have the fight required to stay in the division. Today's trip to Corinthian Casuals represents another chance to ease their relegation fears.

Fleet Town v Ashford Town

AVOIDING relegation is also top of the agenda for Ashford Town, who are still a win or two away from securing their place in the division for next season.

Last Saturday Steve Lovell's side helped their survival hopes with a 2-0 win against Sittingbourne, although they slumped to a 1-0 defeat at home to Metropolitan Police on Monday night.

Ramsgate v Folkestone Invicta

A TRICKY Kent derby could be key to Folkestone Invicta's Ryman South title hopes as the season draws towards a close.

Despite a 10-point penalty for going into administration, Folkestone remain in the hunt for the title but will have to bounce back from Monday's surprise 1-0 defeat against Whyteleafe.

While Invicta eye up promotion, Ramsgate's season is fizzling out. Jim Ward's side have won just three games this year and have recorded three consecutive goalless draws.

Invicta will assess Jimmy Jackson's fitness before the game after Thursday night's clash against Walton & Hersham. The Rams will be without injured keeper Danny Twyman, who is out for the rest of the season.

Walton Casuals v Sittingbourne

GARY Abbott may turn to his younger players to reignite their play-off bid at Walton Casuals.

The Brickies' play-off hopes were dented last Saturday when they were beaten 2-0 by struggling Ashford Town. With up to two games in hand on their rivals, reaching the all-important top five is still a realistic end-of-season target.

NON-LEAGUE FIXTURES

TODAY

All games kick off at 3pm

RYMAN PREMIER DIVISION: Carshalton Athletic v Cray Wanderers, Dartford v Aveley, Maidstone United v Ashford Town (Middx), Tonbridge Angels v Boreham Wood, Tooting & Mitcham v Margate

RYMAN DIVISION ONE SOUTH: Chatham Town v Walton & Hersham, Corinthian Casuals v Whitstable Town, Fleet Town v Ashford Town, Ramsgate v Folkestone Invicta, Walton Casuals v Sittingbourne

Picture: NICK DUNGAN

ON A ROLL: Tunbridge Wells (red) are in form

League and cup double in Town's grasp

KENT LEAGUE PREVIEW

FAVERSHAM Town could pick up two trophies this weekend as the Kent League enters its final week of the season.

The Lilywhites start as warm favourites tomorrow when they contest the Kent Senior Trophy with Greenwich Borough.

Justin Luchford's side are 24 points clear of their opponents in the league, but did lose 3-2 when they visited Oakley Road in January.

It could turn out to be a memorable weekend for Faversham, who could seal the league title without kicking a ball in anger this afternoon.

Richard Sinden's 80th minute strike sealed a 1-0 win against Sevenoaks on Tuesday, which took them to the brink of the championship.

Herne Bay are the only side who can overhaul the leaders and Simon Halsey's side host Fisher knowing anything other than a victory will hand the title to Faversham.

On paper, a home game against a side in the bottom four should not pose too many problems, but Fisher's five wins in six games has seen them top the division's form table.

Tunbridge Wells are another side in good form, taking seven points from their last three games.

A 3-1 midweek win at Norton Sports sent Martin Larkin's team back into the top 10 and they will be hoping to maintain their strong finish with a result at Holmesdale.

With Greenwich not in action, Hythe Town can go fourth with victory at Lordswood. Erith, in sixth, visit seventh-placed Sevenoaks, whose defeat at Faversham was their fifth in a row.

Another side desperately out of form are Erith & Belvedere. Once seemingly set for a top-four finish, five defeats on the bounce have sent them tumbling into the bottom half. They host Norton, while third-placed Beckenham visit Deal Town.

KENT LEAGUE FIXTURES

TODAY

All games kick off at 3pm

KENT LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION: Deal Town v Beckenham Town, Erith & Belvedere v Norton Sports, Herne Bay v Fisher, Holmesdale v Tunbridge Wells, Lordswood v Hythe Town, Sevenoaks Town v Erith Town

TOMORROW

KENT SENIOR TROPHY FINAL: Greenwich Borough v Faversham Town (at Park View Road, Welling)

GOING UP: Justin Luchford and Faversham, could win title before Sunday's cup final

Angels boss eyes up rivals

By FRED ATKINS

Warrilow uses break to watch opponents in action

Tonbridge Angels v

Boreham Wood

KICK-OFF 3PM AT LONGMEAD STADIUM

WHILE his leg-weary players were handed a mini-break this week, there was no rest for Tonbridge Angels manager Tommy Warrilow, who spent time scouting his upcoming opponents ahead of a crucial week for the club.

After a comprehensive 3-0 win at Horsham on Saturday, Warrilow watched Aveley beat Bognor Regis 2-0 on Monday before heading to Boreham Wood 24 hours later, to watch today's opponents at Longmead draw 0-0 with AFC Hornchurch.

"You could see they're a good side," Warrilow said of Boreham Wood. "They try to play football the right way and they've got a very good squad, but they were two teams you could see were a little bit nervous."

The Angels boss was left hoping Thursday night's home fixture with Harrow Borough hadn't added to his casualty list, but the suspended Adam Burchell is out this afternoon.

However, influential midfielder Lee Minshull returns to the squad after serving a suspension and Kirk Watts should have recovered from a bad back.

Pictures: DAVE COULDRIDGE

GOOD WIN: (l-r) Sam Long celebrates scoring with Sonny Miles during the win at Horsham, while Adam Burchell (right) is suspended for today's home game against Boreham Wood

Striker Meshach Nugent could also figure for the run-in after suffering an injury that has blighted his Angels career thus far.

Warrilow was as satisfied by the manner of last week's win over Horsham as the margin.

Anthony Storey whipped in a free-kick after just seven minutes, Sam Long made it 2-0 six minutes after the restart and Jay May wrapped up the points on 90 minutes.

"The pitch was one of the worst I've seen at our level," Warrilow said. "I can't believe how bad it was, so any thoughts of pretty football went by the by.

"It was a professional performance with lots of character and I couldn't really single anyone out, but we've kept a clean sheet so our back four and goalkeeper have conceded just four goals in 11 games."

The Angels manager felt the win vindicated his decision to play a virtual reserve team in their Kent Senior Cup quarter-final with Sittingbourne the preceding Thursday, when Tonbridge drew 2-2 and lost on penalties, after leading twice.

"We fielded two players against Sittingbourne who started the league game and I think it paid dividends," he said. "They looked fresh and workmanlike and the squad at the moment isn't looking too bad."

Town boss fumes at 'superstar' mentality

Sevenoaks Town v

Erith Town

KICK-OFF 3PM AT GREATNESS PARK

SEVENOAKS Town go into today's Kent League clash with Erith Town looking to improve on a poor run of form that has seen them drop out of the Premier Division's top four.

Manager Simon Jones' fears that Town's quest for a highest-ever league finish might be harmed by the schedule were vindicated when they lost three games in the space of six days last week.

Jones felt his side had thrown away the first game, after two key errors handed Tunbridge Wells a 2-1 win last Thursday.

"We are not a team of superstars, so we should stop playing like we are," he told the club's website. "There are so many excuses we could use. We had players rolling up late, delayed by trains, but the guys should have been prepared and we put teams on the pitch for a reason."

At Beckenham on Saturday, Town lost 2-1 when sub goalkeeper Sean Meyer dropped a cross into his own net after Joe Minter's 25-yarder had given the visitors the lead in the 47th minute.

Town were then beaten by Faversham on Tuesday night, when Richard Sinden's diving header with 11 minutes left made it 1-0, after some heroic defending.

Picture: IGOR KUPCO

ANGRY: Simon Jones says there are no excuses for players' late arrival at games

If that result was difficult to swallow, Jones was furious about the Beckenham game.

"Their forward cannot put his arms around our centre half and pull him out of the way," he said. "If that is a fair challenge then I am playing the wrong game.

"How Joe Minter didn't get a penalty at the other end when he was brought down I don't know. I have my own opinion on the referee's performance, which I am not prepared to share. I thought we showed a little bit of desire against Beckenham which we didn't last Thursday and I thought we were unfortunate."

Town were in action against Fisher on Thursday night. For the match details, visit www.kentnews.co.uk.

Boss forced to battle without key forwards

Holmesdale v

Tunbridge Wells

KICK-OFF 3PM AT OAKLEY ROAD

STRIKERS Benji Agana and Mike Lord will be missing when Tunbridge Wells attempt to maintain winning momentum in the Kent League this afternoon at Holmesdale.

Agana starts a two-match suspension after accumulating 10 yellow cards and will miss the remaining two games. A family commitment makes Lord unavailable.

Manager Martin Larkin said: "It's a shame we're missing both players today but I expect Mike to be available for the final game at home to Erith & Belvedere next week.

"On the plus side I was impressed with Keelan Mooney, who scored his first goal for the club in the midweek 3-1 win against Norton and stays in the side. Everyone else is available."

Larkin, who is about to complete his first season in charge at Culverden, makes no secret of his ambition to occupy a final position higher than 10th, where the club have finished for the past three seasons.

He said: "If we can finish ninth that would be terrific – anywhere in the top half but 10th. It's almost an obsession because it represents an improvement.

"To make sure we finish higher than 10th we need to win both of our remaining games."

The Wells chalked up their ninth league win of the season with Tuesday's 3-1 win away to Norton Sports at Winch's Field, despite problems before the game which caused them to arrive 20 minutes before kick-off.

"Let's just say there was a navigational issue," Larkin said. "We take great pride in getting our preparation spot on and we weren't able to do that because we were left with less than 10 minutes to warm-up. But we calmed things down and the players went out and gave an excellent performance."

The Wells had to come from behind to win after Norton took a 10th minute lead. Mooney equalised in the 16th minute and Carl Cornell gave them the lead in the 23rd.

Jon Pilbeam made it 3-1 in the 40th to kill off the game before half-time.

"We had chances to increase the lead but we had done enough by then and I believe fatigue had set in because we've been playing so many matches," Larkin added.

Picture: NICK DUNGAN

EQUALISER: Keelan Mooney's goal against Norton was his first for the club

Legend Leonard to turn out for veterans

WORLD Cup winner Jason Leonard could be making an appearance at Tunbridge Wells Rugby Club this afternoon.

Leonard, who turned out for Saracens and Harlequins, is expected to play for Essex Veterans, in an inaugural inter-county game with a West Kent Veterans side at St Mark's today.

The Barking-born front-row forward, 41, is England's most capped player. He came on as a substitute during England's win over Australia in the 2003 World Cup final and also played in the defeat to the Aussies in the 1991 final.

The Kent side will be made up of veterans from Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge Juddians, Sevenoaks and Maidstone.

The match kicks off at 3pm.

By FRED ATKINS

TJs in pursuit of perfection

Champions need one more win to complete second season unbeaten

A TYPICALLY ruthless display last weekend saw Tonbridge Juddians move to within one game of completing a second consecutive season undefeated.

The London 2 South East champions outclassed Lewes to win 57-12 in their final home game of the season.

The usual rout looked on the cards when Logan Oliver burst down the right to set up Sam Burgess for the opening try in the first minute.

Hooker Tom Murray crashed through from close range 10 minutes later and within three minutes Logan Chandler touched down on the left.

Murray added his second and TJs' fourth try of the half, but Lewes then came back into the game with two tries to make it 26-12 at the break and force a rethink on the sidelines.

"We over-committed at the breakdown but once we sorted that out we stopped giving away penalties," coach Peter Dankert said. "They had a very good first-half. They've got some good young players who used the ball, threw it left and right and put us under a lot of pressure."

Satisfied

The less gung-ho approach worked as TJs scored 31 unanswered points after the break.

Henry Tanner scored two tries before he was forced from the field after a clash of heads and Burgess also added a second.

Tom Wagstaff and Pete Jennings also went over and with Shaun Cooper adding six conversions, Dankert was a satisfied man.

"We were very pleased with the way we played and the weather and conditions suited us down to the ground," he said. "The players that stood out were the players in key positions like nine, 10 and 11. Pete Jennings and Shaun Cooper were able to get a fast ball away."

The first-team are without a game this weekend, but the Warriors take on Canterbury 2nds at The Slade this afternoon, in a game that will decide who wins Invicta League 1.

Dankert says they'll resist the temptation to plunder the first-team.

"I wouldn't do that and we wouldn't do it as a club, because it's not right to do it," he said. "The only first-team guys involved will be the ones who've been sitting on the bench."

TJs' final game of the league season is at Warlingham next Saturday.

Picture: NICK DUNGAN

LEAGUE LEAP: Tonbridge Juddians (right) will play in London 1 South next season

Picture: NICK DUNGAN

PLAY-OFF: Cranbrook are away to Uckfield

Cranes to miss key players for play-off game

Uckfield RFC v Cranbrook RFC

KICK-OFF 3PM AT HEMPSTEAD PLAYING FIELDS

CRANBROOK have been told they will have to play their promotion play-off at Uckfield this afternoon, even though the Sussex side have yet to complete their season.

Uckfield are guaranteed to finish second in Sussex 1, but aren't due to play their final game until April 24.

As a result Cranbrook, who assumed they were without a fixture this afternoon, will be below full-strength for the game that will decide whether they go up to London 3 South East next season. Two players had booked holidays, while loose-head prop Steve Hall dislocated his shoulder in last week's 33-26 win at Sittingbourne.

Cranbrook director of rugby, Mike Catt, said: "He sent me a text message last week saying he was all right, but I can't see him playing."

As a result Cranbrook will shore up their pack, which struggled against Sittingbourne, sacrificing speed to bulk up the second row.

Catt was philosophical about the decision to hold the game this Saturday.

"Legally and technically it shouldn't be played until after they've finished their season, because they might field an ineligible player and lose points," he said. "The problem is the Sussex League is so weak there are only four or five sides who are eligible to go up. In my opinion it's wrong, but we're quietly confident."

Cranbrook sent a scout to Uckfield's 25-20 win at Seaford last week to run an eye over their opponents.

"They've got a young fly-half whose supposed to be very good, so we'll be targeting him, but we've got to play our own game," Catt said. "You can't think too much about the opposition, you've got to look at your own pattern. If we win our ball we'll be all right."

Tired Wells take foot off pedal

WITH all the pressure off after winning the previous week's epic relegation decider against Old Elthamians, Tunbridge Wells' season meandered to an end with a home defeat by Beckenham last weekend.

A much-changed Wells side were missing Mark Higgins, Pete Binham, Stephen Daly, John McMahon and Mike Doherty in the 15-27 loss to a Beckenham side they had beaten on the opening day.

Club chairman Roger Clarke admitted: "Psychology was against us because we had done all the hard work a week earlier in beating Elthamians.

"Because of that, I felt we lost our competitive edge. Everyone was on a knife-edge the week before and I believe it drained a lot of players.

"It's been a long, hard season and fatigue set in on Saturday. Everybody needs a break."

With Higgins, Binham and Daly lost to the pack, Wells had their work cut out against a highly mobile Beckenham.

The visitors started brightly and made the perfect start when Vai Mahutariki broke on the blind side to run in a try from 25 metres. Ted Mahutariki added the conversion.

But Beckenham were unable to further exploit their dominance and the Wells battled back with Luke Giles scoring a penalty that made the half-time score 7-3 to the visitors.

Beckenham restored their seven-point advantage soon after the break before Wells' Tom Hathaway intercepted a Beckenham attack deep in his own half and ran through for an unconverted try.

Picture: BRUCE ELLIOTT

INTERCEPTION: Tunbridge Wells' Tom Hathaway on his way to a break-away try

That left two points between the teams with more than 25 minutes remaining and produced a grandstand finish.

Another Ted Mahutariki penalty took the Beckenham lead to five points before James Perry fired in a cross kick that found Pat Wright who rounded the covering winger and went down in the corner. Mahutariki completed the conversion for his 100th point of the season.

Beckenham's pressure told when Perry went over and Mahutariki added the conversion.

Wells mounted one final attack and Toby May was on hand to score a fine team try and present Giles with the opportunity of slotting over the conversion for the last score.

RUGBY LEAGUE TABLES

LONDON ONE SOUTH

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Gravesend	26	24	0	2	625	283	+342	48
2 Sidcup	25	18	1	6	643	336	+307	37
3 Dover	24	18	1	5	577	327	+250	37
4 Cobham	26	18	0	8	538	391	+147	36
5 Beckenham	26	14	2	10	551	437	+114	30
6 Chichester	26	14	0	12	496	344	+152	28
7 Old Colfeians	25	14	0	11	574	488	+86	28
8 Chobham	26	11	2	13	529	510	+19	24
9 Wimbledon	26	12	0	14	408	468	-60	24
10 Thanet Wanderers	26	11	1	14	474	511	-37	23
11 Tunbridge Wells	**26**	**10**	**1**	**15**	**421**	**539**	**-118**	**21**
12 Old Elthamians	26	10	0	16	436	441	-5	20
13 Maidstone	26	1	0	25	241	939	-698	2
14 Aylesford Bulls	26	1	0	25	269	768	-499	0

LONDON 2 SOUTH EAST

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Tonbridge Juddians	**21**	**21**	**0**	**0**	**1097**	**167**	**+930**	**42**
2 Hove	21	18	1	2	636	275	+361	37
3 Sevenoaks	**22**	**16**	**0**	**6**	**716**	**491**	**+225**	**32**
4 Warlingham	20	12	1	7	555	269	+286	25
5 Lewes	22	12	1	9	448	472	-24	25
6 Old Reigatian	22	9	1	12	467	544	-77	19
7 Purley John Fisher	22	9	0	13	379	502	-123	18
8 KCS Old Boys	22	8	1	13	415	705	-290	17
9 Deal & Betteshanger	22	7	0	15	326	479	-153	14
10 Old Dunstonians	22	7	0	15	314	688	-374	14
11 Bromley	22	6	1	15	415	646	-231	13
12 Eastbourne	22	2	0	20	264	794	-530	4

KENT 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Dartfordians	22	19	0	3	571	205	+366	38
2 Cranbrook	**22**	**17**	**0**	**5**	**523**	**286**	**+237**	**34**
3 Sittingbourne	22	12	1	9	448	369	+79	25
4 Gillingham Anchorinas	22	11	1	10	444	358	+86	23
5 Vigo	22	11	1	10	327	312	+15	23
6 Old Olavians	22	10	1	11	363	428	-65	21
7 Sheppey	22	9	0	13	401	448	-47	18
8 Ashford	21	8	2	11	331	413	-82	18
9 Beccehamian	20	7	1	12	322	494	-172	15
10 Guys' Hospital	21	13	0	8	589	364	+225	10
11 HSBC	22	5	0	17	288	441	-153	10
12 Erith	22	4	1	17	179	668	-489	7

‘Mighty’ Cranbrook Town hope for record-breaking crowd

STAR STUDDED: Cranbrook is the subject of new film due out this year

THEY play in Division Four of the East Sussex League and their highest gate this season is “about 30”, but Cranbrook Town are hoping to smash their attendance record this afternoon, by pulling in a crowd of 2,000 for their home game with Travaux FC.

The Brook have been trailed all season by a camera crew, who are filming a movie called ‘The Mighty Cranbrook Town,’ provisionally set for general release at Christmas, with the first screening taking place at the Kino cinema in Hawkhurst.

Cranbrook’s manager, Phil Gower, admits it all sounds slightly improbable, but says it came about due to one of his players having connections with the film industry.

“They said they were interested in making a movie about an amateur football club, filming during training, doing interviews and looking at all the hard work we do at this level,” he said.

“The idea is the game means just as much to us as it does to the professionals and they wanted to see what it would be like for the lads to play in a big game, so we’re trying to get the local community involved and the aim is to try and get 2,000 people there.”

Commemorative

It’s an ambitious figure – Cranbrook’s population is only just over 6,000, but the team have been busy touring local schools and handing out flyers and tickets in the town centre.

Their Facebook group already has more than 500 members.

“We’re hoping to break Cranbrook Town’s previous record, which was about 1,100 for a charity game about 20 years ago, although nobody in the town seems to remember too much about it,” Gower said. “Realistically we’d like to get 1,200 to break the record, 2,000 would be perfect.”

If they can manage that, the game is likely to be the best attended in Kent after Gillingham’s home game with Leeds United in League One.

The Brook are hoping to raise up to £10,000 for Kent Air Ambulance, so for the first time in living memory they will be charging an admission fee today, with tickets priced at £10 a seat, or £5 if you buy a special commemorative scarf and £3 to stand on the touchline.

The game has been switched from Brook’s usual home ground in Jockey Lane, to Jaeger’s Field, opposite the Weald Sports Centre on the A229.

OAKS’ FINAL PUSH

Cup offers showpiece end, but Sevenoaks will be underdogs

By **FRED ATKINS**

Sevenoaks RFC v Old Elthamians RFC

KICK-OFF 2PM AT KNOLE PADDOCK

WHILE some clubs can be a bit blasé about the Kent Cup, Sevenoaks go into today’s semi-final with Old Elthamians with their strongest possible side, as they look to end their season with a showpiece occasion.

The Oaks, who finished third in London 2 South East, take on an Old Boys side they will face next season following their relegation from London 1 South.

After missing out on a play-off place and a chance to battle for promotion, Sevenoaks are keen to end their season on a high.

“It would mean a great deal to reach the final,” coach James Leverington said. “We have won the cup once before I think, about 10 years ago, but as a squad, with a couple of the scalps we took along the way, it would be a massive confidence boost and a reward for the efforts at training and in game time this season.”

Underdogs

The Oaks’ only success in the competition came in 1997, when they beat Canterbury 28-24, though they were runners-up to Westcombe Park two years later.

This time around their passage to the last four included two victories against opponents from higher divisions.

After a 27-24 win at London 1 South side Sidcup in the first round, they beat National League Canterbury 24-8 away, before annihilating London 3 South East side Charlton Park 84-0 at the Paddock in the quarter-finals.

Against an Old Elthamians side that have struggled this year, Sevenoaks have every right to fancy their chances.

“We start as underdogs,” Leverington admitted. “But it gives you an extra focus because it’s not going to be easy. We lost to Old E’s twice last year, but this year we have a bigger, better and fitter squad so it will be an interesting battle.”

Picture: NICK DUNGAN

STRONG FINISH: Sevenoaks have defeated some top opposition on way to the semi-final

Sevenoaks’ form could hardly be better going into the tie.

They concluded their league season last week with a 65-13 win at Purley John Fisher, their fifth consecutive win guaranteeing them a third-place finish.

The display had Leverington purring: “Talk about saving your best till last. It was by far our best performance of the season. If I nit-picked I’d find some things we could have done better, but the overall structure was fantastic.”

Dan Scott’s man-of-the-match performance has put him in contention for a starting role today, though Leverington was characteristically reluctant to single out individuals.

“Defence and attack kept a structure we had worked on and our focus as individuals was all about team performance,” he said.

• ***On Sunday the Sevenoaks Academy squad travel to Henley for the National Plate semi-final against Taunton, kick-off 11.30am. The final will be held at Northampton’s Franklin Gardens.***

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Did you know? Lincoln Furniture Warehouse are now open at the end of the Pantiles.